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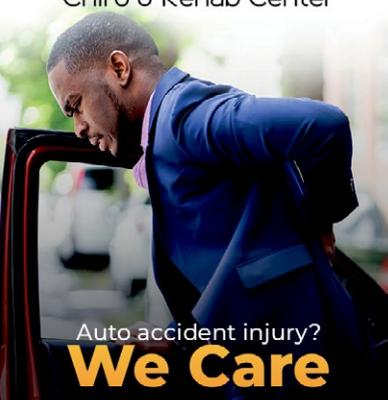
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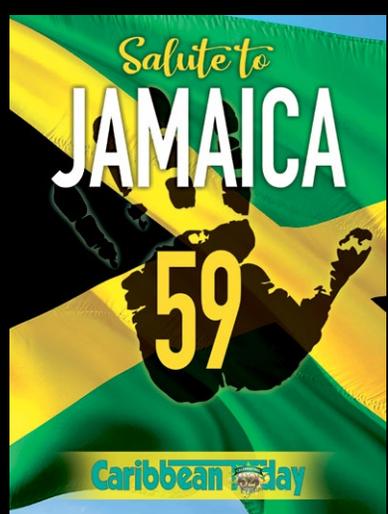


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Jamaica To Celebrate 59th
Birthday ... B1



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HOPELESSNESS

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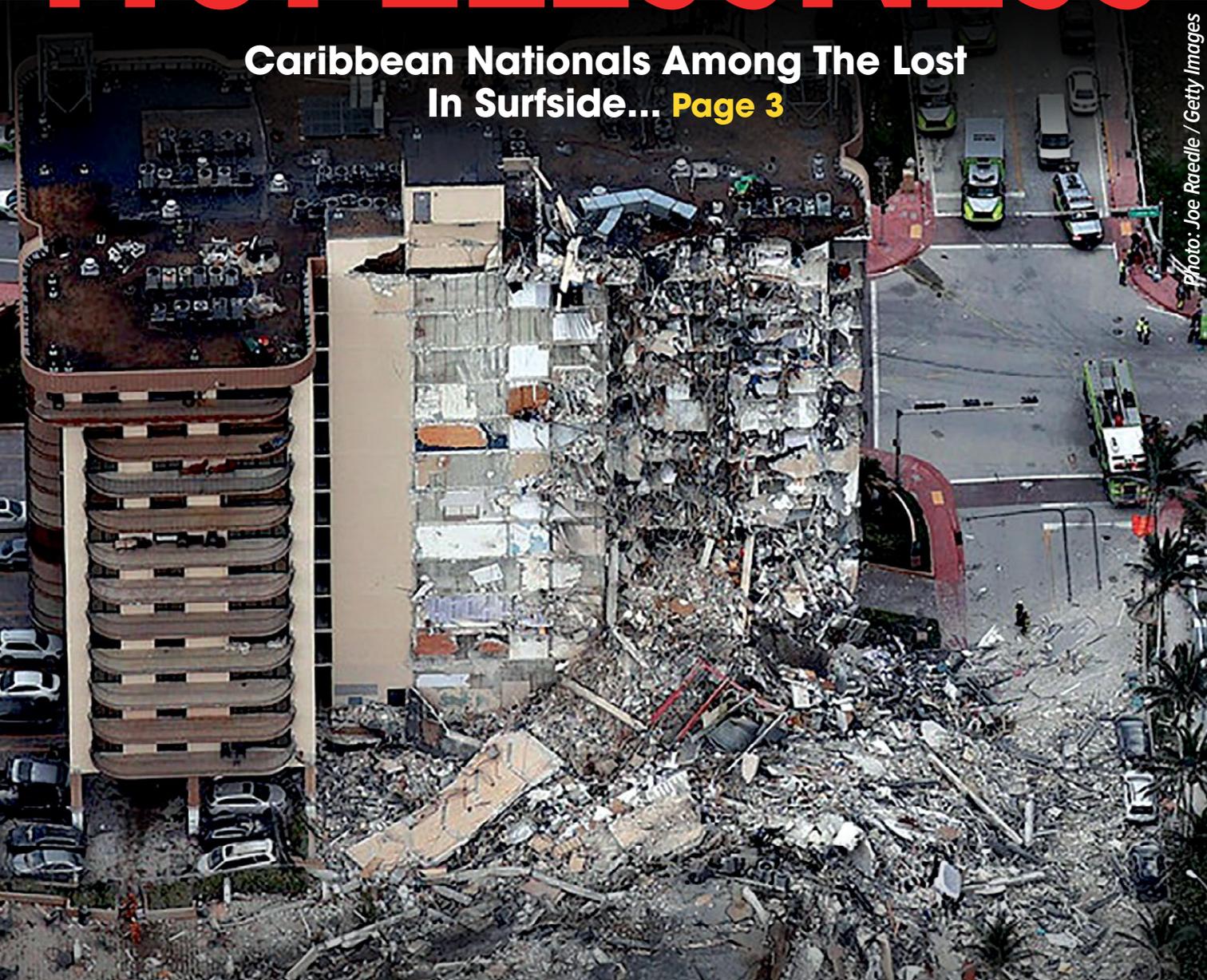


Photo: Joe Raedle / Getty Images



Juan and Ana Mora and their son, Juan, Jr.



Luis Andres Bermudez



Magaly Delgado

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Regional Caribbean News Round Up

Here's a synopsis of all the major Caribbean news from the region you can use:

REGIONAL

President of the Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Dr Gene Leon, has proposed the formation of a regional action group, combining the strengths and capacity of key regional institutions to drive the Caribbean's economic and social development agenda.

Mapping out a pathway for progress during the inaugural hosting of "The President's Chat" that formed part of the CDB's 51st Annual Meeting, Leon spoke of the region as an ecosystem where collaboration and integration are required elements.

He said that the action group should include Caribbean Community (CARICOM) because of its reach and the trade dimension; CDB with its focus on development policy and financing; the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) because of its broader political mandate for economic cooperation among its members.

Leon said the University of the West Indies (UWI) would also be required to provide the

educational element that will bridge the skills set required for future growth as well the Central Banks as financing institutions and because of the payment systems. The newly appointed CDB President also said it was important to include representatives from the private sector in the action group.

BAHAMAS

The United States Coast Guard recently transferred 18 Haitian migrants to the Bahamas following an interdiction about one mile east of Lake Worth Inlet, Southern Florida.

The US Coast Guard said authorities had detected a 27-foot vessel without lights at night and after it was stopped "it was discovered the vessel was overloaded with 18 Haitians and one Bahamian"

The Coast Guard said the Bahamian national was brought ashore for further questioning by US Homeland Security Investigations and that US Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations law enforcement officers took custody of the vessel. The US Coast Guard said it stopped 262 Haitian migrants since October last year, compared to

418 Haitian migrants in fiscal year 2020, and 932 in fiscal year 2019.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

The Trinidad and Tobago government says that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had an impact on both oil and gas production here.

Energy and Energy Industries Minister, Stuart Young, addressing the Trinidad and Tobago Section of the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPETT) International Energy Resources Conference and Exhibition, said whereas oil production has rebounded to the 2019 level, gas production is taking a little longer to regain the momentum that was dampened by plant turnarounds, reduced demand due to low petrochemical prices and operational issues including infrastructure work to bring on new production.

"The issues that impacted on gas production in 2020 and so far in 2021 have been largely addressed or mitigated. Ammonia and Methanol prices which hovered around the US\$200 per metric ton in 2020 have rebounded. As at May 2021 the US FOB price of methanol

was US\$375 per metric ton and the ammonia Caribbean FOB price was US\$508 per metric ton," Young said.

HAITI

It's official – Haitians must now apply for and receive a visa to travel to Guyana, a fellow CARICOM regional nation. President Irfaan Ali, by executive order, revoked free visa access to Haitians as of June 22, 2021. To fly to Guyana, Haitians will now have to apply for and be interviewed for a visa.

The move by the President came as his attorney general announced that the government has decided to move in the direction of reinstating visa requirements for Haitians and Cubans. But the revocation order signed by the President only addresses Haitians. The People Progressive Party/Civic government has expressed concern that while thousands of Haitians travel to Guyana, there was no record of the majority of them leaving and they believe that points to them leaving illegally and falling victims to smuggling.

Haitians would usually fly into Guyana via Barbados and Panama and travel to neighboring Brazil or French Guiana where there are large Haitian populations. Haiti is a full member of CARICOM and under the CARICOM Charter, citizens of member states are allowed an automatic six-month vacation stay in another member state once they meet all immigration requirements.

GUYANA

Police have confirmed that three people died following an explosion aboard a coastal fuel tanker at a wharf at Friendship,

Seepersaud Persaud, a boat captain of Bee Hive, Essequibo Coast; Mark Mangal and 29-year old Damion Dias, a sailor of Sarah Johanna, East Bank Demerara.

The authorities said that the bodies were discovered after the fire had been extinguished and that they found what seemed to be yellow bottles of gasoline in the captain's car trunk. "As a result checks were made in the boat captain's motorcar... which revealed 5 six gallon bottles and one 5 gallon bottle with suspected gasoline which were found in the trunk of the said motorcar," the police said, adding that investigators have taken samples of the contents. Investigators were informed that Canada Club had delivered a shipment of diesel and gasoline at Guyoil Adventure, Essequibo Coast Friday, June 25 and returned to the wharf at Friendship. The police said the explosion came from the engine room and that a hose had been observed connected to the fuel pump. It was also observed that the remains of a yellow plastic bottle was found near the hose.

ST. KITTS & NEVIS

The Government of St. Kitts and Nevis has announced a 24-hour lockdown as part of a slate of additional restrictive measures being taken to limit the movement of people, in an effort to stem the spread of COVID-19 throughout the twin island federation.

Nationals will have limited movement on Thursday, July 8 and Friday, July 9 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on both days and return to 24-hour lockdown on Saturday, July 10th and Sunday July 11th." He also announced that a Shelter in Place Order will be strictly



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An explosion on a wharf in Guyana killed three.

East Bank Demerara while gasoline was being pumped out of the vessel into plastic bottles.

"At the time there were no maintenance works being conducted on the said vessel. It appears that the deceased were pumping gasoline from the sediment or reserve of the fuel tank," the police said in a statement regarding the incident on Saturday evening, aboard the vessel named 'Canada Club.'

The police have identified those killed as 60-year-old

enforced by law enforcement officers.

GRENADA

The Grenada government says it will begin making the necessary adjustments to allow public servants to receive a four per cent salary increase as of August this year, seven months after it had become due.

"Not only teachers but every single public servant will get

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5A)

Caribbean Nationals Among Victims Of Miami Building Collapse



People visiting a makeshift memorial for the victims of the building collapse, near the site of the accident in Surfside, FL. (Chandan Khanna/AFP via Getty Images)

At least five Caribbean born nationals are known to be among the victims of the Champlain Towers South apartment building that it is now feared to have killed potentially scores of people when it collapsed on June 24, 2021.

Three nationals of Cuba and one from Puerto Rico are so far identified among the missing.

Magaly Delgado, 80, originally of Cuba, lived on the ninth floor of the building for more than 10 years. Her daughter, Magaly Ramsey, said her mother “loved the building (and) loved the community.”

Ramsey said her mother was trying to “live her best life” in Champlain Towers South condos by the water and was a devout Catholic. Delgado was a “woman of faith” who taught Ramsey to have faith as well, and while the family is “burdened with such despair,” they have faith “in the miracles that God can create,” Ramsey said.

“Never in a thousand years did I think that was her building or that her building is just not there anymore,” she told the AP. “The worst thing is not to know. “Knowing, whatever the outcome may be, you hope that they didn’t suffer if something did occur. But knowing is a little bit healing in itself.”

Also missing from Cuba are Juan and Ana Mora and their son, Juan, Jr.. Immigrants from Cuba and devout Catholics, Juan and Ana Mora took their family on missionary trips to the Caribbean to build churches and bridges, said Jeanne Ugarte, a close friend of Ana. Later, they became like second parents to Juan Jr.’s friends in Chicago, where their son has managed East Coast distribution for Morton Salt’s road salt business, his friend Matthew Kaade said.

Luis Andres Bermudez, a young graphic artist from Puerto Rico, is also among the lost. He was an inspiring example of courage who never let a disability keep him from his dreams or dampen his sunny disposition, his former teacher told the AP.

Andres Bermudez, 26, lived with his mother Ana Ortiz, 46, who also was identified as one

of the casualties of the collapse. “Luis Andres is an example of courage and bravery FOR ALL of us,” said Jose J. Ortiz Carlo, a teacher who had Andres Bermudez in a photography class at Robinson School in Puerto Rico, where he graduated in 2014.

Despite being confined to a wheelchair because of muscular

dystrophy, Andres Bermudez, known as Luiyo, never missed school and was always smiling, the teacher said on Facebook. In 2018, he launched Saucy Boyz Clothing, a fashion line of T-shirts and caps with his artwork on them that he called “a dream come true for me” on social media. The young man’s father, Luis Didi Bermudez, who

was separated from his mother and was not in the building when it collapsed, mourned his son, saying in a Facebook post translated from Spanish, “You are and will be the best in my life.”

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



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Caribbean American Legislators Sue NYPD

Two Caribbean American New York State legislators have filed a lawsuit against the New York Police Department (NYPD) for allegedly violating their free-speech rights.

The lawsuit, filed by Assemblywoman Diana C. Richardson and Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie, also names the City of New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio, NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea, NYPD Chief of Department Rodney Harrison, and certain known and unknown NYPD officers as defendants.

The lawsuit aims to hold the police, city officials and the City of New York accountable

for violating the legislators' rights and seeks changes to the NYPD's policies in policing protests, especially those that implicate issues of race and police brutality.

Assemblywoman Diana C. Richardson and Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie.

"On May 29, 2020, I stood in the streets of Brooklyn with my constituents to voice outrage after the murder of George Floyd added yet another tragic chapter to the long history of police brutality against Black citizens," said Myrie, who represents the 20th Senate District in Central Brooklyn,



Assemblywoman Diana C. Richardson and Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie

in a joint statement. "My community and I were in grief and pain, and I sought to add my voice to the chorus of protest, standing in solidarity as the community called for police accountability for violence against Black citizens."

"At the same time, I felt I had an obligation to try to mediate and keep the peace between citizens and the police, given the large police presence and the intensity of the community's pain," added Myrie whose grandmother hailed from Jamaica. "Yet, instead of being given a chance to mediate as peacemaker, I, too, became a victim of violence by the police department."

Richardson, who represents the 43rd Assembly District, also in Central Brooklyn, said "like so many of my fellow New Yorkers, I took part in a peaceful protest against the killing of George Floyd and the lack of accountability of police departments across this country for their use of excessive force, particularly against Black and

brown Americans." "As an elected official with close, positive relationships with local police officers, I fully expected those tasked with keeping the peace on May 29 to observe, intervene only if necessary and generally protect the rights of New Yorkers to make their voices heard," Richardson, the daughter of Aruban and St. Martin immigrants, added. "Instead, I and many of my constituents were beaten with bicycles and pepper sprayed."

"I will not allow yet another incidence of excessive force against Black Americans by police officers to be swept under the rug. I have the ability and the obligation to hold the police who violated my constitutional rights accountable," Richardson added.

To accomplish this goal of accountability, the lawsuit requests, among other things, a court order requiring the NYPD to reform its policies and practices to prevent the use of tactics that lead to excessive

force, like "kittling" and hitting protesters with bikes, and invade citizens' constitutional right to free speech, including by protesting police brutality and racial injustice.

"With this lawsuit, we will shine a light on the injustices Black Americans have suffered at the hands of police for far too long," Richardson said. "We seek accountability; we seek change; we seek justice. And we will keep fighting until we get it."

Myrie said that he and Richardson filed the lawsuit with two aims in mind, namely "to vindicate the personal violation of our rights as citizens who were abused by the police; and as elected representatives of the community, who seek to ensure the police department is held accountable by making real policy change to ensure citizens' constitutional rights are not disregarded this way in the future."

In announcing the lawsuit, the law firm of Kaplan Hecker & Fink LLP, which is representing Myrie and Richardson, said in a separate statement that "the lawsuit seeks to vindicate our clients' rights and the rights of their constituents to peacefully stand up for racial justice and speak out against police brutality without the threat or occurrence of police violence."

The lawsuit seeks damages for the injuries suffered by Myrie and Richardson, as well as injunctive relief to, among other things, "end the increasingly common practices of 'kettling' – i.e., corralling protesters in confined areas to trap and arrest them en masse – and using bicycles as weapons to bludgeon and batter peaceful protesters."

~ Edited from CMC.



Constitutional Referendum In Haiti Moved To September

Haiti will hold a constitutional referendum on Sept. 26, 2021, the same date as presidential and legislative elections, authorities said, after postponing the date twice in part because of the pandemic, an official calendar showed Monday.

Political tensions in the Caribbean nation have been running high in recent months and Haitians have expressed fear of violence going to the polls.

Violence has spiked in the capital Port-au-Prince in recent weeks as rival groups battle with one another or the police for control of the streets, displacing thousands and worsening the country's humanitarian crisis.

Elections were scheduled for Sept. 19. Postponing the referendum was done to give the health ministry time to deal with the COVID-19 crisis, Guylande Mesadieu, the president of the electoral board said in an interview.

The electoral council said in a statement that the country will implement health measures to curb the spread of the pandemic so that Haitians could cast their votes safely.

Municipal and local elections have been scheduled for Jan. 16, 2022, the calendar also showed.

It is not clear what the constitutional referendum will

entail but Moise has previously said the powers of the president needed to be strengthened to break a "decades-long cycle of political crises."

The presidency was weakened in Haiti's 1987 Magna Carta.

Haitians mistrusted strong figureheads in the wake of the Duvalier family dictatorship notorious for human rights abuses and corruption.

~ Reuters - (Reporting by Andre Paultre in Port-au-Prince; Writing by Stefanie Eschenbacher; Editing by Stephen Coates)



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Dead After First COVID-19 Dose

At least four people in Trinidad and Tobago may have died after having been given the first dose of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine.

Epidemiologist Dr Avery Hinds made the disclosure to reporters, noting that the deaths resulting post vaccination were persons who only had their first dose and those deaths would have occurred less than two weeks after vaccination.

He, however, said that they are still compiling and validating the vaccination information and noted that health officials are still attempting to get the documentation on the vaccine itself from some of those individuals.

Dr. Hinds said such a result is in keeping with the expectation that the first dose of vaccine still needs a couple weeks before one's immunity is boosted sufficiently by it. Health authorities warn that pregnant women who suffer from diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and asthma, as



Trinidadians line up outside the Barataria Health Centre on Seventh Street, Barataria to get COVID-19 vaccines. (Stabroek News Image)

well as those who are over 35 or in the second half of pregnancy are more likely to become seriously ill if they contract COVID-19.

On June 27th, the Ministry of Health reported that 204, 209 persons had received their

first jab of the various vaccines, while 71, 246 had received their second dose.

~ *Rewritten from Trinidad Guardian*
★

Elsa Leaves At Least 3 Dead In Caribbean

Tropical storm Elsa has been blamed for at least three deaths in the Caribbean.

At least one person died, and several buildings damaged when Hurricane Elsa brushed St. Lucia on its passage through the Eastern Caribbean on Friday, July 2nd, Prime Minister Allen Chastanet has confirmed.

Meanwhile, a 15-year-old boy and a 75-year-old woman died on Saturday, July 3rd in separate events in the Dominican Republic after walls collapsed on them, according to a statement from the Emergency Operations Center.

The deaths come a day after Elsa caused widespread damage in several eastern Caribbean islands as a hurricane, the first of the Atlantic season.

Among the hardest hit was Barbados, where more than 1,100 people reported damaged



Damage in St. Lucia from Hurricane Elsa

houses, including 62 homes that completely collapsed as the government promised to find and fund temporary housing to avoid clustering people in shelters amid the pandemic. Dozens of trees and power lines lay strewn across Barbados, where several schools and government buildings were damaged and hundreds of customers were still without power on Saturday, according to officials.

~ *Rewritten from CMC & CBC News*
★

Regional Caribbean News Round Up

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2A) their salary increase, EC\$1.2 million (One EC dollar=US\$0.37 cents) in addition to what their salaries are," Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell said.

He told the handing over of a pre-school in his constituency of St George's Northwest last weekend that the public servants "will be getting that right on until the end of the agreement in 2022".

Trade unions representing public officers have confirmed that the Government's Negotiating Team (GNT), has offered bonds instead of cash at an interest rate of three per cent representing the payment for the first seven month of the year. The offer is still under negotiation. Late last year, the government wrote to the unions urging that the four per cent salary increase that was due to have taken effect from January 1, this year be deferred. But the unions objected and staged various industrial actions including protest marches and vigil demanding the increase.

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved US\$50 million in Supplemental Financing for the Second Fiscal Reform and Resilience Development Policy Credit (DPC) for St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The original DPC was approved in June 2020.

"The volcanic eruption began as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was still coping with the devastating socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19

pandemic," said Tahseen Sayed, World Bank Country Director for the Caribbean.

BARBADOS

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved a US\$100 million COVID-19 Response and Recovery Development Policy Loan Thursday for Barbados. The operation will support the country's COVID-19 relief efforts and promote a resilient economic recovery from the crisis.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected Barbados, which had been successfully implementing its economic reform program," said Tahseen Sayed, World Bank Country Director for the Caribbean. "There have been serious impacts on key sectors such as tourism, leading to an increase in unemployment, with disproportionate effects on women. The World Bank's assistance will contribute to the country's efforts for a resilient and inclusive socioeconomic recovery."

The pandemic has had severe socioeconomic impacts in Barbados due to the heavy dependence on tourism, which accounts for about 40 percent of jobs, more than half of which belong to women. The economy contracted by an estimated 18 percent in 2020, and unemployment claims reached roughly one third of the workforce last year.

BERMUDA

Bermuda Labor Minister Jason Hayward says the

coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic left almost 10 per cent per cent of the Bermudian workforce unemployed in November.

He said the jobless rate for Bermudians was 9.6 per cent, according to the November 2020 Labor Force Survey Report, with majority black Bermudians being

hardest hit by the pandemic-driven recession. The survey also showed that the overall unemployment rate was 7.9 per cent, which equated to 2,891 people, up from 3.8 per cent or 1,394 people a year earlier, although 497 people of the 2,981 said they were temporarily unemployed in the survey period.

Hayward, who delivered the figures at a news conference also outlined the second phase of the government's National Re-employment Strategic Plan.

~ *Rewritten from CMC and NewsAmericasnow.com*
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NEWS



Case Of Indian Fugitive Further Adjourned

The Dominica case against Indian fugitive Mehul Choksi continues to be postponed. Chief Magistrate Candia Carette-George has adjourned the case to July 6th.

Choksi is before the court in Dominica on a charge of illegally entering the island late in May. High Court judge, Justice Wyanante Adrien-Roberts, had previously denied bail to Choksi, ruling that she was not satisfied that Choksi had enough ties in Dominica to not flee the island.

In addition, the judge said the High Court cannot impose any condition that will assure Choksi will not abscond. But she told his lawyers that they could reapply for bail at a later date.

Choksi has pleaded not guilty to the charge, claiming that he had been kidnapped in Antigua and taken to Dominica on May 23rd.

Choksi was granted Antigua and Barbuda citizenship in 2017 under the island's Citizenship by Investment Programme (CBI). He is wanted by the Indian judicial authorities for criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, cheating and dishonesty including delivery of property, corruption, and money laundering.

DOMINICA PM

The delay comes as Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit has



Indian fugitive Mehul Choksi

dismissed as "total nonsense" suggestions that Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda had played a role in the alleged kidnapping of Choksi.

Skerrit, speaking on his weekly television program, reiterated that Choksi, who had been granted Antigua and Barbuda citizenship under that island's Citizenship by Investment programme (CBI), will have a fair hearing before the courts.

"This idea of a collusion between the government of Antigua and Dominica is total nonsense," Skerrit told his viewers adding "whatever facts, whatever information Mr. Choksi may have, he has an opportunity to present it before the courts."

"But to say that the

government of Dominica, the government of Antigua colluded, give me a break, that's total nonsense, we don't get involve in those type of activity, those practices," Skerrit said, further describing the allegation as "absurd".

"It is unfortunate that anybody who would want to propagate this, an unsubstantiated claim by a gentleman who is before our courts...so this is not true at all," the PM said. "If the courts rule that Mr. Choksi has to be sent back to Antigua...then we will respect that. So, there is no issue, the government of Dominica does not hold a brief for the government of India, neither do we hold a brief for Mr. Choksi."

Skerrit said he has every confidence that the rule of law here will be obeyed, adding that Choksi has his lawyers "who are fighting for him in the courts."

"It is not my practice to make comments on things before the courts, including matters involving myself," PM Skerrit said, adding "the courts will determine what will happen in this regard."

"We will respect the rights of Mr. Choksi, his lawyers will fight his case and let the independence of the courts determine this," he added.



US-Based Caribbean Investment Agency Partners To Deliver Aid To Volcano Stricken St. Vincent And The Grenadines

With thousands of persons still displaced on the Caribbean island of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, (SVG), from the La Soufrière volcano of April 9th, US-based Caribbean investment agency, Invest Caribbean, recently teamed with The Ritzury Group to handover some US\$50,000 worth of supplies officially to the government, through the National Emergency Management Organization, (NEMO) SVG.

Felicia J. Persaud, founder and CEO of Invest Caribbean, the global private sector investment agency based in New York and South Florida, and Danielle Corbin, executive chairman of The Ritzury Group, the global project services agency of the Caribbean, based in Barbados, paused their joint international investment efforts on April 10th to set up the "Saint Vincent Volcano Disaster Relief" to accept donations soon after the volcano erupted. Corbin flew to St. Vincent soon after the eruption to assess the situation in the red and orange zone areas and meet directly with residents and farmers who lost homes and livelihoods and were forced to live in basic shelters with nothing but the clothing on their backs.

On June 16, 2021, a larger donation of supplies from the group, sent over from Barbados via the British High Commission in SVG and their navy ship, and the Barbados Coast Guard, were handed over by the group's local on the ground partner, Pastor Althan Nelson Samuel, to aid the



Director of the National Emergency Management Organisation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Michelle Forbes, (I), Dr. Orlando Brewster, (R) and Pastor Althan Nelson Samuel, (C) (News Americas/Seymour Hinds image)

medium-term relief.

In receiving the items at a handing over ceremony, Director of the National Emergency Management Organisation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Michelle Forbes, expressed heartfelt thanks to Invest Caribbean and The Ritzury Group on behalf of NEMO and the government of SVG, while Minister with responsibility for Gender Affairs, Dr. Orlando Brewster, said he was happy to be witnessing the handing over of the items that are needed at this time, since most residents displaced in the north of the country had to leave behind everything.

The groups focus now, through its Saint Vincent Volcano Disaster Relief GoFundMe, is raising additional funds to financially help Sponsor A Farmer, a Small Business Owner and a Family, to help them relocate and build back stronger amid the hurricane season. The needs are still critical. Support the effort today at the Saint Vincent Volcano Disaster Relief on GoFundMe or <https://gofund.me/7231b33f>





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Caribbean Candidates Win In Preliminary NY Primary Elections

A number of Caribbean candidates are leading in the unofficial results of the June 22nd New York Primary elections with ranked-choice voting, used for the first time in the city's elections, delaying the official declaration of a winner even up to mid-July.

New York City voters, for the first time, were able to rank candidates according to their preferences. The city's Board of Elections said that more than 191,000 New Yorkers cast ballots during the early voting period. The board also said that it received about 220,000 requests for absentee ballots.

Based on the Board of Elections' preliminary results from voting on Tuesday, Caribbean candidates Jumaane Williams, Farah Louis, Rita Joseph, Mercedes Narcisse and Crystal Hudson are leading in the in-person ballot.

With 83.99 per cent of the precincts reporting, Williams, the incumbent New York City Public Advocate and son of Grenadian immigrants, is way ahead of his nearest challenger, Anthony Herbert.

Williams garnered 486,538 votes, or 71 per cent, to Herbert's 144,922 votes, or 21.2 per cent. Theo Tavaréz is a distant third, with 53,551 or 7.8 per cent.

Williams's primary campaign issues were ensuring a just COVID-19 recovery, redefining public safety, and increasing government transparency and accountability.

For New York City Comptroller, Brian Benjamin, the Harvard-educated son of a Guyanese mother and Jamaican father, came a distant fourth in a 10-way race, receiving 56,377 votes, or 7.7 per cent. Bad Lander, with 229,021 votes, or 31.4 per cent, is leading the contest, with 83.99 per cent of the precincts reporting.

For Brooklyn Borough President, Haitian-born, New York City Councilman Dr. Mathieu Eugene and Kari

Edwards, the son of Trinidadian and Guyanese immigrants, are fourth and fifth, respectively.

Trisha Ocona, a community leader and small business owner, whose mother is Jamaican and her father Venezuelan, is a distant ninth.

With 91.1 per cent of precincts reporting, Dr. Eugene, who represents the predominantly Caribbean 40th Council District in Brooklyn and is prevented from seeking another term because of the city's term limit laws, has garnered 20,570 votes, or 8.1 per cent, in the race that involves 11 other candidates. Edwards has secured 15,912 votes, or 6.3 per cent; and Ocona received 7,791, or 3.1 per cent.

New York City Councilman Antonio Reynoso is leading the race with 71,751 votes, or 28.2 per cent.

In Queens, the incumbent Borough President, Donovan Richards, who traces his roots to Jamaica, is in a tight race with his closest challenger, Elizabeth Crowley. With 76.64 per cent of precincts reporting, Richards is leading with 64,814 votes, or 41.7 per cent, to Crowley's 62,738 votes, or 40.4 per cent. James Van Bramer, the other candidate, has received 27,813 votes, or 17.9 per cent.

In Brooklyn's 35th Council District, Crystal Hudson, the daughter and granddaughter of Jamaican immigrants, is leading the seven-way race that includes Renee Collymore, the daughter of a Barbadian father.

Hudson is trying to succeed term-limited City Council Member Laurie Cumbo in the district that comprises the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Prospect Heights, Crown Heights and a portion of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

With 100 per cent of the precincts reporting, Hudson has received 12,308 votes, or 38.6 per cent. Her closest challenger, Michael Hollingsworth, has secured 11,017 votes, or 34.5 per cent.



Caribbean American NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams has unofficially again won the post.

Collymore, a former Democratic District Leader and daughter of the late Barbadian immigrant, Cecil Collymore, is third, with 4,000 votes, or 12.5 per cent. If Hudson is eventually declared the official winner, she will be the first openly gay Black woman elected to the New York City Council.

In the race to succeed Dr. Eugene, another Haitian is leading the race among 10 other candidates in Brooklyn's 40th Council District. Rita Joseph, a long-time public-school teacher and community activist in Brooklyn, is ahead of her Haitian-born compatriot Josue

Pierre, who is in second place. Joseph has earned 5,060 votes, or 25.3 per cent, to Pierre's 4,073 votes, or 20.4 per cent.

Two other Haitians – Edwin Raymond, a New York Police Department (NYPD) lieutenant, and Maxi Eugene, Dr. Eugene's brother – have also contested the seat in the district that comprises the neighbourhoods of Ditmas Park, Flatbush, Kensington, Midwood, Prospect Lefferts Garden and Southern Crown Heights.

Raymond is fourth with 1,636 votes, or 8.2 per cent, and Eugene is seventh with 992 votes, or five per cent.

Two Guyanese – community activist John Williams and lawyer Victor Jordan – are also in the race. Williams is ninth, with 601 votes, or three per cent and Jordan last, securing only 303 votes, or 1.5 per cent.

In the adjacent, 45th Council District, which is also heavily Caribbean-populated, the incumbent, Haitian American New York City Council Member, Farah N. Louis, is poised to win the seat by a landslide.

With 82.64 per cent of the precinct reporting, Louis, the daughter of Haitian immigrants, is far ahead of her closest rival,

Jamaican American Anthony Beckford, a US Marine veteran and community activist. Louis has received 12,812 votes, or 76 per cent, to Beckford's 3,335 votes, or 19.8 per cent. The other contender, Cyril Joseph, has received 707 votes, or 4.2 per cent.

In the race for representation in the 46th Council District in Brooklyn, Haitian-born registered nurse Mercedes Narcisse is leading in the eight-way contest. With 83.48 per cent of precincts reporting, Narcisse – who was endorsed by veteran New York State Assemblyman Jamaican N. Nick Perry, representative for the 58th Assembly District in Brooklyn – has received 5,856 votes, or 35.9 per cent. Narcisse's closest rival, Shirley Paul, garnered 2,694, or 16.5 per cent. Haitian community worker Gady Brazela received 2,378 votes, or 14.6 per cent, to take the third spot.

Retired NYPD detective Barbadian Dr. Judy Newton is fifth with 1,422 votes, or 8.7 percent; and Guyanese Dimple Willabus is sixth with 1,199 votes, or 7.3 percent.

~ Edited from CMC.



Jamaica CG Offers Condolences To Victims Of Champlain Towers Collapse

As the death toll continues to rise in the horrific Champlain Towers South residential building collapse, a Caribbean counsel general has offered condolences to the grieving families.

The Consulate-General of Jamaica in Miami Oliver-Mair, joined millions globally in offering prayers.

"We offer condolences to all those impacted at Surfside," a message on the consulate's Facebook page stated. "The prayers of Consul General, Oliver-Mair and the staff of the Jamaica Consulate General, Miami are with those affected

by the tragedy in the city of Surfside. It is difficult to understand tragedies like this, but we offer our prayers and support to those impacted during these times."

The Consulate-General of Jamaica, Miami said persons who are seeking information should call 305-614-1819 or go to Miami.gov/emergency to report missing persons or check someone in as safe.

The family reunification Centre is located at 9301 Collins Avenue, Surfside.



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Call Him The Soul Of Rurality

A prominent farmer and advocate for resilient agriculture in the Caribbean has received the “Soul of Rurality” award in 2021 from the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) on Leaders of Rurality in the Americas.

Ramgopaul Roop, of Trinidad and Tobago, was recently presented with the IICA honor that recognizes men and women who are leaving their mark and making a difference in rural Latin America and the Caribbean.

In 2019, the story of Roop spread to many corners of the world, when his example of perseverance and thirst for learning was circulated by several print media and social media platforms. He quickly became a source of inspiration for people from all walks of life with a desire for progress and self-improvement.

It began when news got out that - at the age of 71 - this curious and determined Trinidad and Tobago farmer and entrepreneur, had obtained his Master of Science in Business with Distinction, specializing in Human Resources, from Edinburgh Napier University in Scotland.

Roop studied for the degree long-distance from his farm in Trinidad, then travelled to the United Kingdom for his graduation ceremony. A mere ten years before, he did not even know how to use a computer.

“I had to reorganize my life to study online. As a farmer, it wasn’t easy to work all day in the heat of the tropical sun and then study for long hours at night, sometimes until dawn”, said Roop, who is a diabetic, who must constantly monitor his blood sugar levels to ensure that they remain stable.

He confessed that, “Of course, there were many times, when working in high temperatures, I was on the verge of collapsing in the

fields from hypoglycemia, but I never thought of abandoning my studies. I knew this was the last train and I was determined to catch it. The process was quite challenging but also very stimulating. I am convinced that there are no age limits for academic achievement or for professional development”.

In fact, Roop’s history of perseverance began many years before. Born in 1947, he is the descendant of Indians who migrated to Trinidad and Tobago in the 19th century, under Imperial Britain’s infamous system to obtain cheap labor for its plantations in the colonies. Roop’s parents were peasant farmers who could not read or

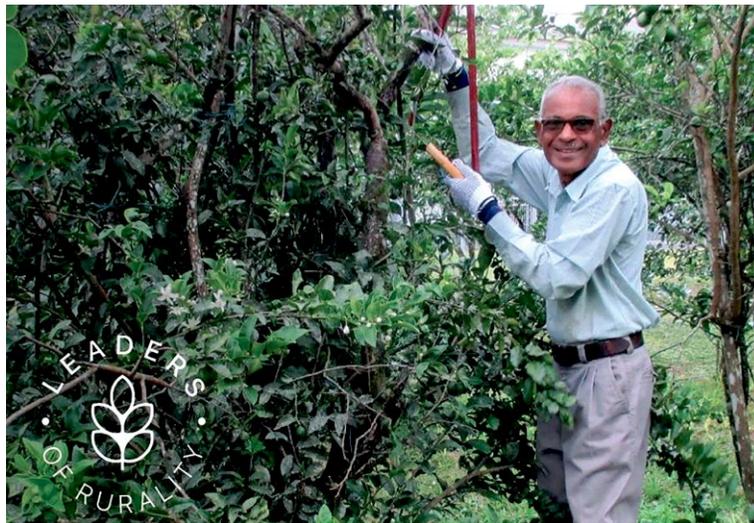


The family farm is situated in Carlsen Field, an agricultural region in Central Trinidad, approximately 30 kilometers from the capital, Port of Spain. (IICA image)

write.

In 1971, he earned his Diploma in Agriculture from the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry and established his family farm in 1990, which he now operates with his wife Beena Roop, and his son Sunil. However, he never gave up his desire to continue learning.

The family farm is situated in Carlsen Field, an agricultural region in Central Trinidad, approximately 30 kilometers from the capital, Port of Spain.



With research and patience, Ramgopaul Roop has learned to adapt to climate change, becoming an expert in soil care and natural resource management. (IICA image)

He explained that “After seeing my three sons graduate from university - two in Medicine and one in Engineering - I was eager to acquire higher academic qualifications, by pursuing an MBA”.

His entire family was supportive of his adventure, particularly his wife, Beena, who read and re-read the drafts of many of the papers that Roop submitted to the Scottish university. “I know that my parents, Poyah and Roop Bataw, are proudly looking on from heaven,” he remarked, with emotion in his voice.

On the 1.5-hectare farm, Rocrops, Roop gained first-hand knowledge about the real vulnerability of farming in the Caribbean’s small islands, but instead of giving in, he worked tirelessly to implement resilient agriculture.

“Extreme events made more severe by climate change endanger the livelihoods of vulnerable groups”, he said, “among them, family farmers who depend on seasonal rains and on land that is often marginal to produce food”.

He pointed out that, “These events limit production and the profitability of small farmers, particularly those who are cultivating in problematic soils.”

With research and patience, Roop has learned to adapt to climate change, becoming an expert in soil care and natural

resource management. Thanks to innovation and his continuous quest for solutions, he has become the gold standard for farming in this small island, which depends on imports to guarantee the country’s food security.

Roop is convinced that, despite high exposure to extreme climate events, small farms in the Caribbean can become sustainable production units that are passed on from generation to generation. His case is one such example.

In developing his farm, he has sought to apply a holistic approach that includes environmental preservation, effective water management and the incorporation of technologies that can strengthen resilience against climate variations and boost crop yields.

Roop pointed out that, “In Trinidad and Tobago, agriculture accounts for only 0.5% of the value of total output but employs more than 4% of the population. Thus, it is essential in rural areas, economically and socially speaking. The farming community is aging and must be replenished by young people. Therefore, young people must be able to see that there is path to achieving sustainable agriculture in the Caribbean”.

On his farm, Roop has also incorporated agroecological soil rehabilitation practices that are environmentally friendly. His main achievement has been to promote sustainable agricultural techniques and business practices with the potential to contribute to rural development and food security in Trinidad and Tobago.

The primary goal of Rocrops Agrotec is to employ good agricultural soil and water management practices, through management and planning around seasons of drought, flooding and erosion. Rocrops has also become a focal point for visits by students pursuing agricultural studies.

Rocrop Agrotec’s work has been promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries of Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean Agri-business

Association, the Trinidad and Tobago Agri-business Association, the University of the West Indies and the University of Trinidad and Tobago, as an innovation model for tackling the limitations of natural conditions. Well on his way to also becoming an academic, Roop has worked with IICA’s Climate Change Program to publish scientific articles on his model farm and is currently enrolling in a Ph.D. program at Napier University.

The family home has become a site for training and instruction for university students pursuing agricultural studies, as well as for members of nearby communities.

“The award pays tribute to those who are playing a unique dual role: guaranteeing food and nutritional security, by producing under all circumstances, as well as protecting the biodiversity of the planet,” stated IICA Director General, Manuel Otero. “It will also emphasize their capacity to be positive role models in rural areas of the region.”

~ *Rewritten from IICA.int/en*
✳

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Three Immigration Rule Changes You Should Know

There are a number of immigration rule changes that are happening and have happened in recent weeks that readers of this column should be aware of. Here are 3 you should know of:

1: The EB-5 Regional Center Program will now expire on June 30, 2021 since the U.S. Senate blocked a proposed reauthorization and reform bill. The EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act of 2021 had sought to reauthorize the EB-5 Regional Center program through FY2026 and makes various changes to the program, such as imposing various oversight requirements. The bill failed to pass in the Senate when Sen. Lindsay Graham (R-South Carolina) objected to unanimous consent.



FELICIA J. PERSAUD

U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), ranking member of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, on June 24th, brought up his EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act on the Senate floor requiring unanimous consent. U.S. Sen. Graham objected to the bill, which would have reauthorized the program and instituted oversight requirements, among other reforms.

Grassley had teamed up with U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) in March to introduce S. 831. U.S. Reps. Greg Stanton (D-AZ) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) in April introduced the identical companion bill, H.R. 2901, in their chamber. This means that the EB-5 visa program is unfortunately going to lapse in the days ahead and have untold economic consequences throughout the communities that rely on the program for development projects. With the Senate recessing until after July 1, the EB-5 regional center program will expire though Congress may pass an extension in July, experts say.

“Meanwhile the window of opportunity to file at \$500,000 ends June 30, 2021 and we are experiencing a frenzy of I-526 filings as investors seek to jump in at \$500,000,” said Bernie Wolfsdorf, former president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

2: Meanwhile, on June 22, 2021, federal Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District

of California, struck down the USCIS rule which had increased the EB-5 investment amount from \$500,000 to \$900,000. According to the judge, the USCIS Acting Director lacked authority to increase the investment amount to \$900,000 in violation of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998 (FVRA). The court ruled that because the USCIS rule had no force or effect, it must be set aside as an action taken “in excess of statutory authority”, and therefore, the rule was vacated. This means that the EB-5 investment amount is effectively back to \$500,000, per the previous USCIS rule. The USCIS is expected to appeal the decision but right now it cannot apply the rule with the higher investment amount and applicants may submit their applications and invest \$500,000 per the previous rule at this time and/or at least until June 30th.

3: The Biden Administration has announced it is restoring the Obama-era International Entrepreneur Rule (IER), allowing certain foreign national entrepreneurs the opportunity to launch qualifying start-up businesses in the U.S. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced it is withdrawing a 2018 proposed rule that would have removed the International Entrepreneur parole program from DHS regulations.

Under the program, parole may be granted for up to three entrepreneurs per start-up entity, as well as their spouses and children. Entrepreneurs granted parole are eligible to work only for their start-up business.

Their spouses may also apply for employment authorization in the United States; however, their children are not eligible for such authorization based on the program.

An applicant must file Form I-941, Application for Entrepreneur Parole, with the required fees (including biometric) and supporting documentary evidence. The fees are \$1,200 for filing the I-941 and \$85 for biometrics. Additional forms and fees are required for spouses and children. You can find more details on eligibility requirements, filing procedures, and forms, at uscis.gov/humanitarian/humanitarian-parole/international-entrepreneur-parole

~ *The writer is publisher of NewsAmericasNow*



Wives do get their fair share of criticism, but is it justified? Well, the cockney slang for wife is, ‘trouble and strife,’ and some folks refer to them as the old ball and chain. How come there are no disparaging words or terms for girlfriends, no ball and this or trouble and that?

Both have their pros and cons, but many men sort of lean towards the memory of the girlfriend rather than the wife. Is this justified or is it that perhaps they became so chastened by their wives that their memories kind of got clouded? You know, in the same way people refer to the good old days.

Well, the girlfriend is usually a younger model, and always manages to keep herself well put together and attractive. Also, a girlfriend is not yet a wife, so if she wants to become a wife, she has to not only attract the man, but keep him interested in her.

Many wives, after a few years tend to let go, get relaxed, can’t bother to look attractive anymore, settle into a routine and become same old same old. No longer are they making any effort to keep the man interested in them.

When it comes to loving, the girlfriend is always ready and raring to go and will not only jump through hoops but will flip head over heels to please her man. Never will you ever hear of a girlfriend depriving her man of loving.

Wives on the other hand have a reputation for reducing lovemaking as the years roll by. Somehow, it’s no longer a priority and they can take it or leave it. Or is it that some of them feel that it’s their weapon to keep their men in check, a tool to control?

Girlfriends seem to have more energy and always want to do something. “Come Honey, let’s go to the movies, the beach, nightclub.” Wives on the other hand always seem to be tired. “Oh, I have to get up early in the morning,” “I have to wash my hair tonight then put in curlers,” “I have to prepare the children for school tomorrow.”

Girlfriends are compliant and always want to please their men. Wives tend to be bossy, critical, miserable, and are always giving instructions, telling men what to do. “Mow the lawn, take out the garbage, feed the dogs, get the car washed, don’t dirty up the bathroom, keep the kitchen clean, wash the dishes.”

That’s why some men have the best of both worlds as they

Two Women



have their cake and eat it too. They have both a wife and a girlfriend - two women. But having a girlfriend only can be risky, for in many cases, if the man’s fortune changes, she’s not going to stick around.

If the man gets sick, she’s not going to be any nurse. “Listen, I didn’t sign on to be any nursemaid to any man, I’m outta here.” Whereas a wife may stick around through thick and thin, a girlfriend has no such commitment, and will move on faster than you can say hypertension, diabetes and prostate problems.

But what about the wife, who’s also a girlfriend to another man? How come she reverts to the girlfriend mode



TONY ROBINSON

and does all the things that girlfriends do?

Many men say that their wives are loveless boring women, only to have another man describe her as a raging torrent of sensuality.

“Who’s that woman?” Oh, she’s my boring wife.” Meanwhile her secret lover smirks and thinks, “Idiot, she’s the sexiest most passionate woman I know.”

The irony is many girlfriends turn into wives and display the same characteristics as wives do. The same girlfriend who did all those fantastic things, morphs into a woeful wife. “Look how drastically she changed after she got the ring.”

So, two women - it just depends on what stage they’re at - the caterpillar or butterfly.

~ *EDITOR’S NOTE: Tony Robinson can be reached at seido1yard@gmail.com.*



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VIEWPOINT



Unlocking Finance – A Prerequisite For Caribbean Transformation

BY DEODAT MAHARAJ

As we in the Caribbean seek to fast-track recovery and build a post COVID-19 world where business plays a leadership role in creating much needed jobs, access to finance remains a major constraint.

The World Bank in its 2020 Ease of Doing Business Report notes that of the 14 Caribbean countries that were reviewed in its annual report, only 3 of them – Jamaica (ranked 15th), Trinidad & Tobago (ranked 67th) and Guyana ranked 94th), are among the top 100 countries globally in accessing credit. This is out of a total of 190 countries. Simply put, we are not doing well in this critical index.

In 2016, the Caribbean had 11 countries ranked among the top 100. This worsening situation tells an all too familiar story in our region. I hear these stories on a daily basis, in conversations with businesspeople across the Region on the massive challenges in accessing finance.

The World Bank's report captures a very important part of the story on lending in the Caribbean. Surveys undertaken by Caribbean Export point to as much as 48 percent of small and medium scale business, reporting that access to credit is THE major challenge they face.

We at Caribbean Export are providing some critical assistance in this area. With support from the European Union, we continue to provide much needed financial assistance to small and medium business across the Region. More specifically, we have been providing small scale grant financing to help these businesses withstand the shock of the pandemic and create new opportunities.

In 2018, Caribbean Export

awarded approximately Euros 2.2 million in grant funding and about 41% of beneficiaries boasted that the grant funds helped them to penetrate new markets, while 79% reported an increase in export sales. Overall revenues increased for 64% of beneficiary firms and 36% of firms were able to reduce their energy costs having used the grant funds to implement energy efficiency projects. Twenty-one percent of firms were able to enhance general productive capacity and efficiency.

Recognizing that funding support is extremely critical during the pandemic, Caribbean Export plans to build on these results by continuing to offer targeted grant funding on a non-reimbursable basis. The region needs to do more to support this sector which accounts for most jobs generated in our Caribbean.

The Caribbean Development Bank has also joined our partnership with the European Union in this endeavor and we have launched a call for proposals where businesses can access up to USD15,000 in grant finance. Grant funds are often highly competitive and for this reason, they should not be considered as a primary source of income for small businesses, but as cash infusions to fund special projects that can help to speed up growth, particularly post COVID-19. Please do visit our website at carib-export.com to get more information.

Another alternative source of finance is angel investment, which is a form of equity financing where the angel investor supplies capital in exchange for an equity position in the business. Angel investors are high net worth individuals who are looking for a higher rate of return, typically of around 25% to 60%, than would be given by more



Small business owners

traditional investments. Equity financing is normally used by start-up and growth businesses that do not have sufficient cash flow or collateral with which to secure business loans from financial institutions.

Angel investing is still a relatively nascent concept in the region. Consequently, entrepreneurs interested in angel investing need to understand the fundamentals of angel investing and what to expect when an angel investor is interested in an equity stake in their business. Since 2018, Caribbean Export has been offering capacity development support in these areas and plans to continue to provide specialized support to both entrepreneurs and angel investors to bridge the angel investing divide in the region.

The issue of credit is a central issue. Therefore, with funding from the Africa Caribbean and Pacific Investment Climate Reform Facility, we are working to understand the challenges facing CARIFORUM countries in the establishment and operationalization of efficient credit bureaus and secured transaction systems (collateral registries). The World Bank, in its Ease of Doing Business Report, looks closely at these two aspects of the credit infrastructure in a country, noting that credit bureaus and registries are essential elements of the financial infrastructure that help to address

the issue of access to financial services, including credit.

By sharing credit information, a credit reporting system helps to increase access to credit for small firms, improve borrower discipline and support credit risk monitoring. In our region, where movable

assets often comprise most of the capital stock of our private firms, we need to establish systems that allow our firms to use inventory, accounts receivables, crops and equipment as collateral. We cannot transform our Region if we do not innovate and move to a financial architecture that meets the needs of our times.

In summary, we at the Caribbean Export Development Agency will continue to support these initiatives that are having and can continue to have a major positive impact on businesses across our region.

However, the reality is, much more must be done. Particular

attention must be given to the establishment of a regional capital market that can unleash and leverage finance regardless of geographic location. Whereas we recognize the imperative of foreign direct investment, the stark reality is that we have massive assets in our financial sector and pension funds that can be used to spur inclusive growth and job creation both nationally and regionally.

A regional stock exchange will also propel business at the regional level to take advantage of regional opportunities as they seize opportunities provided by new economies of scale. To succeed, we need steadfast commitment backed by a clear and ambitious agenda. Much is at stake and failure is not an option.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Deodat Maharaj is the executive director of the Caribbean Export Development Agency and can be reached at: dmaharaj@carib-export.com

~ Newsamericasnow.Com



A Year Of COVID-19: A Look Back, And Ahead

BY BINDU S. MAYI

This has been difficult to write as I look back on more than 600,000 COVID-19 deaths here in the United States. I am heartbroken to say that I knew a few of those who passed away.

There's so much in life we have no control over – natural disasters being one of them. Is a pandemic a natural disaster, or is it a perfectly engineered storm that comes together when there are so many variables lining up to allow unimpeded spread?

Sixty percent of adults in the U.S. are living with at least one chronic medical condition, putting them in a category at high risk for COVID-19. There are 28.9 million uninsured individuals in our country, which means they won't know, won't seek care and won't modify any high-risk behavior that compromises their health. These facts are disheartening on their own, but when you add in a pandemic, you can quickly see how dire the situation can become.

When Johns Hopkins created the COVID-19 dashboard, making it easier to keep up with new cases and the number of deaths, very few could imagine that we would surpass 34 million cases, and more than 600,000 deaths. How did we get here?

In a country that gave us Dr. Anthony Fauci - he was a hero to us when I was in grad school in the 1990s - and so many brilliant researchers, how did we detach from the sensibility of something as simple as hand hygiene?

How did we decide to forgo social distancing or mask wearing since we are not in the high-risk group? How did we pick politics over science in the midst of an uncertain and potentially deadly pandemic?

Asking these questions puts me in a tailspin of depression and

sorrow for all those families whose lives have been forever changed due to COVID-19, and the ease with which SARS-CoV-2 has found more and more and more bodies to inhabit.

Research shows that misinformation peaks on social media during presidential election years, and 2020 was one such year that did not deviate from the norm. This reveals a tremendous opportunity to utilize social media to spread evidence-based and scientific data in a manner that can be easily understood by everyone. By communicating science through these non-traditional channels, we can ensure that in the future, there will be a greater tendency to follow the guidance recommended by scientific and medical experts.

Many of us have already gotten vaccinated with either the Pfizer or the Moderna vaccines, with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine following closely behind. Some of you have experienced side effects, and while that can be worrisome, it is infinitely better than the morbidity and mortality of COVID-19 or even the long-hauler effect being experienced by some survivors.

Vaccines enhance your body's own ability to prevent severe COVID-19, which, in turn, prevents death.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bindu S. Mayi, M.Sc., Ph.D., is a professor of microbiology in NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine, where she teaches infectious diseases to students in the medical, public health, and other allied health fields. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Dr. Mayi is committed to promoting Infection Prevention as well as Antimicrobial Stewardship.



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Salute to

JAMAICA

59

Caribbean  day

Salute to Jamaica

Jamaica Turns 59



On August 6, 2021, Jamaica will celebrate its 59th birthday. The fight for independence was a hard one but the colony of Jamaica gained independence from the United Kingdom on August 6, 1962.

This came decades after it became an imperial colony in 1509 when Spain conquered the Indigenous Arawak people.

HERE ARE SOME FAST FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

In 1655, British forces took the island with hardly a fight, and the British Empire claimed it. Over the years, escaped slaves joined Indigenous survivors in the mountains, forming a society known as Maroons. Maroons won a war against British forces

(1728–1740) but lost a second war (1795–1796).

In the 1800s, slavery was abolished, and Jamaicans gained suffrage, although the British still held power. In 1943, labor leader Alexander Bustamante won an electoral victory and established a new, more liberal constitution. After World War II, Jamaican leaders developed the government structure to prepare for independence. In 1962, Bustamante’s party won the election, and he became premier. That same year, the UK Parliament officially granted Jamaica independence, and Bustamante became the independent country’s first prime minister.



Here’s How To Travel To Jamaica This Summer

If you are looking to travel to Jamaica this summer to celebrate independence on-island, here’s what you need to do to ensure a stress-free travel.

All persons travelling to Jamaica are required to get a Travel Authorization. Apply at <https://travelauth.visitjamaica.com/> The approved pre-travel authorization form is required prior to boarding and/or entering Jamaica.

Additionally, all passengers 12 and up traveling from the United States and other high risk locations as decided by Jamaica will be required to upload a valid negative PCR or Antigen COVID-19 test. The negative test can be no more than 72 hours old on the expected arrival date.

Returning To The US
In addition to the requirements for travel to Jamaica, the US government is requiring special procedures for all passengers, 2 years of age and older, traveling into the U.S. to submit an attestation form to the U.S. Government that you are COVID-19 negative or



have recently recovered from COVID-19.

Each passenger will be required to submit a form within 72 hours of your trip and bring evidence of your qualifying COVID-19 negative viral test result or your recent recovery from COVID-19, which could be either a physical or electronic documentation of a qualifying COVID-19 negative viral test taken within 3 calendar days preceding your flight’s departure to the U.S. Your negative test result must include your government issued name or passport number, specimen collection date (within the past 3 days), and the lab or physician’s

name.

Jamaican Passports In Miami

In an effort to improve customer service experience, Consul General for the Southern USA, Oliver Mair, is urging applicants to utilize the Passport Immigration Citizen Agency (PICA), online service to renew their passports. Adult renewals can be done online at https://passport.pica-online.com/PICA_ONLINE/.

Mair is appealing to persons to utilize the PICA online service assuring them that the electronic process can be completed within 20 working days.



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Salute to Jamaica

In The Spotlight - First Jamaican American Miami-Dade Commissioner

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

The first Jamaican American elected to Miami-Dade's Board of County Commission, Danielle Cohen Higgins, who won an uncontested seat for District 8 in December 2020, is seeking a full term in the 2022 contest.

In the meantime, Commissioner Cohen Higgins is working hard to create balance and equity for her constituents. With her familiar slogan: "I am with you every step of the way," the Commissioner has announced county initiatives she supported or originated that promises to change the lives of residents in District 8.

One such issue is gun violence. She noted that it is "a critical issue facing our community."

"We have a Peace and Prosperity plan that's authored by our mayor, governed by experts in data, which we are looking forward to passing very, very soon," said Commissioner Cohen Higgins. "It is going to go to committee and get amended so that we are putting forth our best effort to address this critical issue



Commissioner Danielle Cohen Higgins

plaguing our communities."

Humble Beginnings
An attorney with her own practice, Cohen Law, Commissioner Cohen Higgins comes from humble beginnings, with a determination to add value to society. Her parents migrated from Jamaica and settled in Miami-Dade where she was born. Losing her father at age 8, the youngster grew up with in a single-family household with a fierce determination to succeed. The first in her family to attend

university, the attorney who lived in what is now Section 8 housing early in life, is now working on a project to bring affordable housing to her district.

"I sponsored an item regarding a pilot program on affordable housing that is going to start in district 8, and I'm very excited about it," said Commissioner Cohen Higgins. "Thank you to the many cosponsors on this item. As we know, affordable housing is a critical issue in our county and I'm thrilled that we are starting a \$9 million surtax affordable housing program, right here in District 8."

The first-time commissioner is motivated to making sure District 8 is fully represented to get its fair share of economic and political resources. A controversial issue she has put her weight behind is Community Identification Cards. She noted that this is an issue dating back to 2015 which has come up again in recent times.

"Listen, they say the devil lives in the details, and it absolutely does," said Commissioner Cohen Higgins. "What this item does today is

tells our administration to come up with a plan on how we can protect our most vulnerable in our community that simply need a card that says their names and where they live, so that they can get, for example, vaccinated."

"This is an important issue to our community," Cohen Higgins added, "and I'm proud to support it and I look forward to what the mayor will bring back to us with the details..."

It's important to note that our Director of Police and Law Enforcement fully support this along with our Chief of Fire and many other community leaders."

Bringing the number of Blackcommissioners on Miami-Dade Commission to 5, Commissioner Cohen Higgins continues to fight for a well-represented District 8.



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In The Spotlight – An ADDY For This Jamaican



Storm Sauter

Jamaican film director has won a Golden ADDY from the American Advertising Federation.

Storm Sauter won the ADDY for directing a short film for the "US Gentleman Jack Culture Shakers" campaign for Jack Daniels.

Sauter is from Negril, Jamaica and seeks to create universal stories against the complex social and cultural environment of the Caribbean. His debut film, "Better Mus' Come," received critical praise and was cited as representing a new movement of independent filmmaking in the Caribbean.

Sauter has also directed music videos for numerous Jamaican artists, including

Chronixx, Arcade Fire, Protoje, and Popcaan. He also captured visual content for the "On the Run 2," world tour by Beyonce and Jay-Z.

His experimental film and photography work has been exhibited at The Brooklyn Museum, The British Museum, the National Gallery of Jamaica, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Miami and has also worked with athletes like Usain Bolt and the brands Puma and Red Stripe.

Sauter is the co-founder of the New Caribbean Cinema collective, and wrote and directed the feature film "Sprinter," which took major awards at the 2018 America Black Film Festival, including

the award for Best Director, Best Narrative Feature, and the Audience Award. The film won numerous best-of-festival awards that included Best Narrative Feature at the 2019 Pan African Film Festival and the Audience Award at the 2019 BlackStar Film Festival and is now on Netflix.

His pending project is a film adaptation of the book "John Crow's Devil," by Booker Prize-winning Jamaican author Marlon James.

~ Rewritten from LoopJamaica.com



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Salute to Jamaica

In The Spotlight – Jamaican Staff Sergeant Wins Award For Lupus

A Jamaican-born staff sergeant in the British Army has been named one of the five winners in the Defense Category of an award created to battle lupus.

Claudine Martin was named as a winner in the 2021 “We Are The City Rising Star of the Year awards.” Martin has been battling lupus for the past five years and works to raise awareness of the disease.

Originally from Jamaica, Martin emigrated to the UK in 2002 and enrolled in an IT course at a college in East London. She joined the British Army in 2006 after talking with a friend when her son was a year old.

Six months after joining, she was deployed to Iraq. Martin spent two years serving with the Irish Guards and then a year with the Coldstream Guards. Her experience in the military has included working at the Military

Working Dogs Unit, the 22 Engineer Regiment, and the Royal Military Academy. She also served as a Military Steward at Wimbledon and at the London Olympics, an assignment she describes as “the best thing I’ve done with the Army.”

Martin carried out Duty in Cyprus, took courses in Northern Ireland, and participated in adventure training in Germany, Italy, Wales, France, and Austria. She said it was her spirit of adventure that led her to join the Army



Sargeant Claudine Martin

in the first place.

After 11 years of service, Martin requested a PA post at the Ministry of Defense and is not the PA Director of Engagement and Communications. She is a member of the executive committee serving as the Events Lead for the Chronic Conditions and Disability in Defense (CANDID) network. This network is designed to support military personal living with chronic health conditions and disabilities and their families.

She has appeared at various virtual events, including the Wellness Revival Festival where she was a member of a panel of wellness experts who promote wellness in the workplace. Sargeant Martin also spoke at the Fast Forward 15 BAME Ambassadors event and was interviewed on Amaze.tv as part of her work to raise awareness of lupus. She is passionate about motivational speaking and makes motivational vlogs available on her YouTube channel.

~ *Rewritten from Jamaicans.com*



In The Spotlight - Jamaican Set To Compete In Olympics Judo Competition

Jamaican Ebony Drysdale-Daley has made history for Jamaica and is heading to the Olympics where she will compete in the judo competition.

Drysdale-Daley, 26, will compete in Tokyo on July 28th in the women’s 70-kg category. Her qualification was confirmed on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, when the Jamaica Olympic Association (JOA) received a message from Szandra Sdogedi, the secretary general of the Jamaica Judo Association, stating that Drysdale-Daley “has made history for Jamaica and has qualified for the Olympic Games.”

This is the first time an athlete representing Jamaica will compete in the judo event. Drysdale-Daley is based in Britain and first made Jamaican history in judo in 2019 when she won a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games Judo Championships in Birmingham in the United Kingdom.

Christopher Samuda, the president of the JOA, said that Drysdale-Daley’s qualification is a “personal victory of courage,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5B)

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Salute to Jamaica

In The Spotlight - Lukkee Chong Is Proudly Jamaican

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

For those of us who used to fly on Air Jamaica, the island's former national airline, one of the highlights of the journey was watching Island Stylee, the in-flight travel magazine show that welcomed us onboard.

The visions of Caribbean destinations, cultural events, fashion and lifestyle was truly the beginning of our holiday. The man behind those welcoming scenes was none other than video and television producer, Lukkee Chong.

But one could say Chong 'buck up' on the industry. Back in 1972, Chong's neighbor introduced him to Rupert Bent Sr, chief engineer at JBC (Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation) at the time. Bent arranged a meeting with head of engineering, Newton James, and things took a turn, cementing Chong's future.

"I wanted to be a radio DJ because I was at the time part of a sound system called In Crowd Disco and was playing at parties almost every day," Chong told CT. "But, Newton James said 'we don't have any space for a new disc jockey at JBC radio, but we do have an opening in television.'"

"It was Friday October 17, 1972, that I showed up there in long sleeve white shirt and dress pants," Chong reminisced. "I got laughed at immediately. They said, 'roll up your sleeves young boy.' I started at the bottom of the rung and that started my JBC journey in video production and it continues up to today."

FOUND HIS 'VOICE'

He learned the rudiments of sound mixing for television, camera work, and lighting. Chong found his 'voice,' having gone to two high schools in Jamaica - first St. George's College, where he was kicked out for non-performance, then Meadowbrook, where headmaster Lloyd Chin became his mentor.

Chong would leave his cultural stamp on many television productions at JBC where he worked for a number of years. But the time came for him to spread his wings as a freelance video production entrepreneur, which eventually led to a partnership with cinematographer and photographer Max Earle that was formalized as Frame-By-Frame Productions Ltd in the early 90s.

"Through Frame by Frame Productions, we have been involved in the production of commercials, documentaries, music tourism events for international television, the development and execution of Island Stylee travel magazine show, which was shown on board Air Jamaica and on Directv in North America, and aired for several seasons on BET/BETJ, and the accompanying website, www.islandstylee.com," Chong explained.

"With Island Stylee, we wanted to show tourists, and returning Jamaicans, what they could do on land in Jamaica, and of course it spread to the rest of the Caribbean, covering the other Air Jamaica routes," he added.

The Montegonian migrated to South Florida in the United States in 2001, bringing with him his strong cultural identity and



Frame By Frame's Lukkee Chong

the desire to celebrate Caribbean culture through his work.

"Being from the Caribbean, and being here in South Florida, which is a big melting pot for Caribbean people, forced me to want to share more about the Caribbean ... We have such varied cultures, yet there are so many things common to us as Caribbean people whether we are Dutch speaking, English speaking, whether we are Spanish speaking, or from the French Caribbean," said Chong.

PASSION

Through Frame-By-Frame, Chong is able to share his love for the Caribbean and partner

with folks who share his passion. He has worked with Jamaican actors Oliver Samuels, Leonie Forbes, Tony Hendricks, and so many others, "who have contributed their life and their time towards helping us to develop our culture."

Chong is proud of his collaboration with Florida-based Island SPACE Caribbean Museum because of its mission to educate the public about the valuable contributions and positive significance of the Caribbean community. He is the audio/visual producer behind the

scenes, helping to tell the stories of indigenous Caribbean culture and its peoples that must be told through their own voices.

Other projects underscoring his philosophy include an exploration of the Akan character Brother Anansi. Often described as a trickster, Chong is determined to show Anansi as a positive force against historic injustice, through a creative animation concept unveiling Anansi through culturally authentic lens.

His love of music will also come through loud and clear with a new collaboration, 8 Bars of Soul, featuring music from his era created and performed by a fully Black orchestra and singers put together by Antoine 'Breadfruit' Khouri, arranger and conductor.

It's all about showcasing our heritage, Chong insisted.

"Culture is important to us, that is what gives us identity as a people. It's important for us to make sure our identity stays intact, that we continue to find out where we are from, the lives of our ancestors, our ancestry. I am 90 percent African ancestry; there is a little filtering in of Chinese and European. I tell people I am the original mongrel," Chong says laughing. "But seriously, I want our culture to reach the young generation while their minds are still in that formative phase, they are the future."



In The Spotlight - Jamaican Set To Compete In Olympics Judo Competition



Jamaican Ebony Drysdale-Daley has made history for Jamaica and is heading to the Olympics.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4B) commitment, inspiration and faith and a nation's pride." He added that the JOA, which had created a campaign to promote Jamaican representation in diversified sports in Tokyo, is grateful to the Judo Federation

president Dwayne Barrett and to Secretary General Sdogedi who "inspire excellence in athletes and coaches."

With the qualification in judo, Jamaica has raised the number of sports disciplines in which it will compete at the

Tokyo Games to five. Jamaica was already slated to compete in track and field, boxing, gymnastics, aquatics (diving), and swimming.

~ Rewritten from LoopJamaica.com



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Salute to Jamaica

Diaspora Lauded For Contributions to Jamaica

Government Senator, Don Wehby, has lauded members of the Diaspora for making significant contributions to Jamaica through charities and direct investments in agriculture, education, and health, and through community development initiatives.

“Regardless of where they live, the one thing [that] I know is [that members of] our Diaspora are passionate about and love our country,” he said.

Senator Wehby noted that this was also evident in Jamaica’s remittance inflows which, he said, increased by over 20 percent during 2020.

He was delivering the opening presentation in the 2021/22 State of the Nation Debate in the Senate on June 25th.

Senator Wehby encouraged



Government Senator, Don Wehby

members of the Diaspora to continue investing in Jamaica, noting that they represent a reservoir of social and financial capital which must be optimized in national development.

The State of the Nation Debate enables Cabinet

Ministers in the Senate to address their portfolio responsibilities while highlighting Government policies and programs. All Senators are allowed to contribute to the Nation Debate.



New Investment Advisor In Toronto



Jerrold Johnson is now Jamaica's Honorary Investment Advisor (HIA) for Toronto, Canada. (JIS Image)

JAMPRO and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) have officially appointed Jerrold Johnson to be Jamaica’s Honorary Investment Advisor (HIA) for Toronto, Canada.

Johnson will work to promote Jamaican investment opportunities in Toronto and will facilitate business connections to attract investment to Jamaica.

He brings impressive skills, knowledge, and connections to the HIA initiative, and has experience in finance, investment, business development, Fast-moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), and digitized-technologies. He is a founding director of E-Z Block Manufacturing Canada Inc. and E-Z Block Manufacturing Jamaica Ltd, after heading JN Bank (Jamaica National) in Canada for several years.

As Jamaica’s HIA, Johnson will use his wealth of knowledge to bridge the gaps between the Canadian and Jamaican business landscapes. He will be assisting investors with navigating both markets, and it is expected that his work in Toronto will generate more investment interest in Jamaica.

The Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO)’s mission is to drive economic development through growth in investment and export. JAMPRO is an Agency of the Ministry of Industry, Investment, and Commerce.

The HIA initiative is part of JAMPRO and MFAFT’S Economic Diplomacy Program, which is designed to enhance Jamaica’s international visibility as a destination for business.



New Initiative Launched To Provide Funding For Jamaican MSMEs



Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Hon. Audley Shaw, delivers the keynote address during the launch of the \$675-million Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) Loan Programme, at the Ministry’s offices in New Kingston, on June 24, 2021. (Dave Reid image)

Jamaica has officially launched an initiative that will provide an additional J\$675 million (One Jamaica dollar=US\$0.008 cents) to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

The new 4.75 per cent MSME Loan Program is being spearheaded by the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce, through portfolio agency the National Export-Import (EX-IM) Bank, in tandem with Jamaica National Small Business Loans Limited (JNSBL).

Industry, Investment and Commerce Minister, Audley Shaw, who announced the initiative during his 2021/22 Sectoral Debate presentation in the House of Representatives in May., along with the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Sancia Bennett-Templer, and EX-IM Bank Managing Director, Lisa Bell, Thursday signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), formalizing the program’s implementation arrangements.

The program is intended to further assist entities in the productive sector that have been adversely impacted by the economic fallout resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, by facilitating increased access to affordable financing.

Target sectors include agriculture, manufacturing, including agro-processing, and tourism linkages. Approximately J\$200 million, to be managed by JNSBL, has been programmed for micro businesses, which will be able to access between J\$500,000 and five million dollars, repayable over 60 months at an interest rate of 4.75 per cent per annum, with a one-year moratorium.

EX-IM Bank will focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which will be able to borrow between five and \$25 million under similar terms.

~ Rewritten from CMC



National Strategy To Be Implemented To Grow Agribusiness Industry

The Andrew Holness led administration has developed and is in the process of implementing a National Strategy to grow the Agribusiness Industry.

Opening the 2021/22 State of the Nation Debate in the Senate on Friday, Government Senator, Don Wehby, said one of the key recommendations in the Strategy is the establishment of a Food Security and Agribusiness Council (FSAC).

Wehby, who is Group Chief Executive Officer at GraceKennedy Limited, disclosed that in the first instance, the FSAC will execute the four-year agribusiness strategy.

It is expected that the Council will be outcome-focused and will guide the implementation of the Action Plan developed under this Strategy and guide the development of a National Agriculture Development Plan and Strategy that will ensure long-term sustainability and

growth of the industry.

He said JAMPRO’s promotion of the agribusiness sector includes activities in the following areas: large scale climate smart agriculture, improvement of land access; improvement in the use of technology in agriculture, and the development of marketing strategies for the Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee and the development of a strategy for the yam subsector.

Meanwhile, he is challenging Jamaicans to reduce the country’s food import bill by 50 per cent.

He noted that during 2019, the value of food imports was US\$1 billion, with approximately 44 per cent of the imports supplied via sources in the United States.

“We need to cut that food import bill in half, and I have set myself in terms of our company by 2030. We cannot continue to have that level of food imports in Jamaica,” he emphasized.

Senator Wehby noted that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on agriculture have been seen, underscoring that the pandemic places countries like Jamaica’s food security at risk, because of the heavy reliance on imports.

Senator Wehby suggested that less reliance can be achieved by investing heavily in agro-processing, manufacturing, and agriculture, by ensuring farmers have good crop insurance and technical training to mass-produce certain items.

“If we are going to have sustainable growth in Jamaica, we have to have a really robust agricultural sector – both for export and for import,” he said.

The Debate gives Cabinet Ministers in the Senate an opportunity to address their portfolio responsibilities while highlighting Government policies and programs. All Senators are allowed to contribute to the State of the Nation Debate.





*Taste a
Caribbean vibe
in every bite!*



Caribbean Museum Officially Launches

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Island SPACE Caribbean Museum's official launch and fundraising event on June 27th marked a watershed moment for all Caribbean people, at home and abroad. The first of its kind in the world, the organizers' vision to highlight the contributions of regional peoples to the historical development of the world shone through the cultural voices on opening night.

In true red-carpet style, celebrity stylist and designer Tanya Marie welcomed patrons as they entered the Westfield Broward Mall space in Plantation, Florida.

"What started out as a travelling collection of culinary artefacts, into the first museum of its kind, as far as we know, anywhere in the world, Island space Caribbean museum represents all the colors, cultures, flavors, and rhythms of the entire Caribbean region," said co-founder and Executive Director, Calibe Thompson to an enthusiastic audience. "Our location offers an archive filled with historical artefacts and Art Gallery... we've taken the first step in bringing the vision of a collective Caribbean home to life."

The museum is part of a larger non-profit institution dedicated to developing and sharing culture, history, and educational initiatives of and about the Caribbean region. The title, Island SPACE, was specifically created to reinforce the founders' vision to uphold an

Island Society for the Promotion of Artistic and Cultural Education. And indeed, cultural education was a huge focus at its official opening.

BEACON OF LIGHT

Noted Jamaican actor Paul Campbell, with his deeply resonating voice, reminded patrons that the Caribbean was home to several indigenous societies who were decimated by the diseases and violence brought by colonizers.

He spoke about the Spanish, the Dutch, the French, the British who planted their flags throughout the islands of the Caribbean bringing with them their customs and languages, and an agricultural economy that would require workers - the beginning of the trans-Atlantic slavery.

"Once in the colonies the enslaved suffered back-breaking dangerous work that would last all day long, violence, most recognizably by the lash was the ultimate motivator," Campbell bemoaned.

This in turn led to the enslaved motivation for freedom, the actor continued. His impassioned telling of the 18th century Haitian Revolution led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, which resulted in Haiti becoming the first free black nation in the new world, and Jamaica's maroon uprisings led by Queen Nanny, truly captured the audience's attention.

"A change did in the end come," bellowed Campbell. "By the late 1830s, the enslaved throughout the Caribbean, had

all been emancipated. It's at this point that Chinese and East Indian indentured servants and others from the Middle East Germany, Scotland, Ireland, found homes throughout the Caribbean, ultimately contributing to our unique ethnic melting pot. And despite slavery, we can proudly say that Caribbean people have become a resilient creative beacon of light."

SONS AND DAUGHTERS

Former Prime Minister of Jamaica, PJ Patterson, also added his voice to this Caribbean cultural event noting that the next generation of leaders in the USA are Caribbean sons and daughters, proudly referencing US Vice President Kamala Harris.

These successes were highlighted throughout the evening as artists, historians, musicians, athletes extolled the impact of contributions and achievements Caribbean people have made. Haitian-born artist Edouard Duval Carrie spoke about the historical aspect of ancient religion, culture, and politics in his work and the influence that late Haitian artist Jean-Michel Basquiat had on contemporary expressionism. Noted Jamaican artist Basil Watson also spoke about the importance of foundation and current artists on the discipline.

Sports too, took centerstage with the recognition of athletes' influence in track & field, football, baseball. Of course, names like Usain Bolt, Veronica Campbell Brown, Sammy Sosa, and the Reggae Girlz were celebrated and



Shaggy Performing Virtually at the Island SPACE Caribbean Museum official launch on June 27, 2021.

honored.

GLOBAL INFLUENCE

Caribbean history and culture cannot be lauded without its cultural cuisine and music being at the forefront. A lively conversation between Chef Irie (Jamaica), Chef Danny Panalo (Dominican Republic), Chef Winston Williams (US Virgin Islands), and Chef Thia (Cynthia Verna - Haiti) stimulated palates with some of our favorite island foods.

Certainly not to be outdone, music stood tall as we learned from the likes of Kevin Little

of St. Vincent, Jamaica's Inner Circle, and Pat Chin of VP Records, the genesis and global influence of Caribbean music.

Noted Kevin Lyttle: "When 'Turn Me On' came out, that's how we influenced the world with our music. From the time the song came out, people were singing it over and over and remixing it even before it became a number one anywhere."

Jamaica's own singer/recording artiste, Shaggy, is testament to those achievements, and he demonstrated it with an electric performance to end the showcase.

But to keep the 'beacon of light' in this museum going requires donations, financial and material, from patrons and institutions. According to Leary Mullings, the organization's treasurer, Island SPACE Caribbean Museum is a totally not-for-profit self-funding 501(c)(3) Corporation in need of \$10,000 a month to keep its doors open. In fact, the goal of the opening night 'Magic at the Museum' showcase is to raise \$30,000 to remain viable for the next three months. Conveniently, benefactors can give through Zelle & Paypal at give@islandspacefl.org; Cash App: \$islandspacefl or through the museum's website islandspacefl.org.



Jamaican Sculptor Puts The Spotlight On Caribbean's Top Olympians And Historical Figures

The spotlight will be on the miniature sized bronze sculptors of renown Jamaican sculptor and painter, Basil Watson all summer in Miramar.

The best Olympians and historical figures from the Caribbean as captured by Watson will be on display June 1 to August 15, 2021, at the The Ansin Family Art Gallery at the Miramar Cultural Center ArtsPark, located at 2400 Civic Center Place, Miramar, Florida 33025.

The MCC Presents exhibition entitled: 'Maquettes: The Studies And Drawings Of Basil Watson,' is a free and open to the public exhibition as part of the city's tribute to Caribbean American Heritage in the City of Miramar. The exhibition also extends over Jamaica's Independence from Mondays through Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Fridays, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

"Basil Watson's exhibit at MCC is very timely. As we celebrate Caribbean American Heritage Month, the community has an opportunity to see his miniature-sized statues or maquettes which offer a very realistic depiction of some

of the life-sized statues of Jamaica's greatest athletes including Shelley-Ann Fraser-Pryce and Usain Bolt as well as iconic figures like Louise Bennett-Coverley," stated City Commissioner Alexandra P. Davis. "In this Olympic year it is so fitting to have this exhibit of prolific athletes in our Gallery."

Commissioner Davis will complement the exhibition with the hosting of An Evening with Basil Watson where a moderated discussion with Basil Watson and the Exhibit Curator, Christopher Norwood will be the highlight. The reception will take place at the Miramar Cultural Center's Banquet Hall on Thursday, August 5, 2021, from 6 to 9 p.m. The public is invited to attend; however, space is limited. Registration is available at AnEveningWithBasilWatson.Eventbrite.com.

For more information on this exhibition or other cultural programming at the Miramar Cultural Center ArtsPark, log on to miramarculturalcenter.org or follow the city on all social media platforms @miramarcultural.



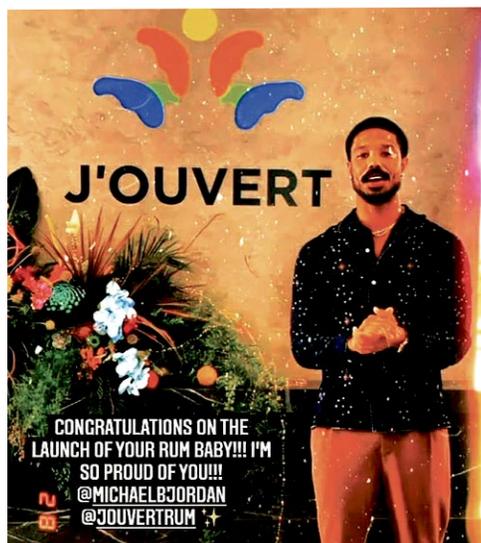
Trademark For J'Ouvert Rum Filed By White New York Resident

Black Panther actor Michael B. Jordan may be taking the front-end brunt of the clapback over his attempt to launch a rum brand on the backs of Caribbean culture and the name of its historic carnival event, "J'Ouvert," but a News Americas investigation has found that an application to own the trademark of the name was actually filed by a White New York resident.

Louis Ryan Shaffer of 78 Orchard St, New York City, quietly filed an application to trademark the name "J'Ouvert," with the US Patent and Trademark Office on September 25, 2020.

The Trademark office published the mark for opposition on April 6, 2021, more than two months ago. In the application, Shaffer stated invalidly that "the wording 'J'OUVERT' has no meaning in a foreign language."

The name J'Ouvert actually originates from the French "jour ouvert," meaning daybreak or morning, and signals the start of Carnival. J'Ouvert is the name of the first official day of Carnival festivities in Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean and its Diasporas. Carnival was



Screenshot of Instagram story posted by Michael B Jordan celebrating the launch of his J'Ouvert rum. He has since apologized and said he will change the name. However, the trademark was applied for by a White New Yorker, not him.

introduced to Trinidad by French colonizers in 1783. Banned from the masquerade balls of the French, the enslaved people would stage their own mini-carnivals in their backyards - using their own rituals and folklore, but also imitating and sometimes mocking their masters' behavior at the masquerade balls.

Shaffer applied for the mark

under the "goods and services" category, as a standard character mark for "alcoholic beverages, except beer; distilled spirits; rum-based beverages; rum." So far, the mark has been assigned a "1 b" category, which under trademark rules simply means its "an 'intent-to-use basis.'"

He is listed on LinkedIn as business & legal affairs at Roc Nation and founder of the BRKTHRU Foundation. He has also worked in the past at FADER magazine and BET, as well as the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. Shaffer has a

doctorate in law from Howard University School of Law and a BA in Public Policy in African American Studies from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, University.

~ NewsAmericasNow.com



How Many Vaccines Will The US Give The Caribbean?

The US government has announced 14 million of its 55 million COVID-19 vaccines will be donated to Latin America and the Caribbean but its unclear how many exactly will go to the Dominican Republic, Haiti and other members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) group of countries.

A White House statement accounted for 54 million doses even though a statement announced: "Biden-Harris Administration Announces Allocation Plan for 55 Million Doses to be Shared Globally." Other countries to benefit from the 14 million include Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Paraguay, Bolivia, Uruguay, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, and Costa Rica. Guatemala's President had indicated recently that he has been promised 500,000 vaccines by the US' Vice President, Caribbean American Kamala Harris.

Approximately 16 million is allocated for Asia and approximately 10 million for Africa to be shared with



Pfizer vaccines

countries that will be selected in coordination with the African Union.

The statement also revealed that an additional 14 million vaccines or 25 percent of the "55 million," will be shared with Haiti, other CARICOM countries, the Dominican Republic and Colombia, Argentina, Costa Rica, Panama, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, South Africa, Nigeria,

Kenya, Ghana, Cabo Verde, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Tunisia, Oman, West Bank and Gaza, Ukraine, Kosovo, Georgia, Moldova, and Bosnia.

How many exactly will be given to CARICOM nations and each country is yet to be disclosed. The White House statement simply stated that "the specific vaccines and amounts will be determined and shared as the administration works through the logistical, regulatory and

other parameters particular to each region and country."

The news comes on the heels of the embarrassing promotion of 80 vials of Pfizer vaccines by the US government to COVID-19 hit Trinidad and Tobago. Gavi, the vaccine alliance, has confirmed that the oil rich twin-island Republic does not qualify for a share of the 500 million vaccines promised by the United States to the COVAX facility for the world and the 14 million promised to Latin America and the Caribbean.

"Trinidad & Tobago is a self-financing participant of the COVAX Facility and as you will be able to see in our statement, the doses will be made available to 92 economies eligible for donor-funded vaccines via the Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), as well as member states of the African Union," the Gavi representative said in a statement quoted by the Trinidad Guardian.

Explaining how the US donation will work, the Gavi official told the paper that:

"Under the plan, 200 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine will be delivered in 2021, starting in August, with another 300 million shipped in the first half of 2022."

"The 500 million doses outlined in this plan are separate from an earlier decision by the US Government to share 80 million doses starting in June as part of a broader global vaccine sharing strategy," the Gavi spokesperson said in the statement to Guardian Media. With regards to how the vaccines will be distributed, the Gavi spokesperson said the COVAX facility aimed to "secure access to vaccines for all participating economies using an allocation framework formulated by World Health Organisation (WHO)."

"Our priorities at the moment are making sure that vaccines reach the groups of the population that need them the most as quickly as possible," the Gavi spokesperson said.

~ *Newsamericasnow.Com*



Know Your Genetics To Lower Your Cancer Risk

A gene mutation that could put you at higher risk for cancer is just as likely to come from your father as your mother. Unfortunately, only 4 percent of those undergoing hereditary cancer gene testing are male, leaving a huge gap in the knowledge that could help you avoid cancer altogether or inform treatment decisions, according to a study published in the journal JAMA Oncology.

"Men do not often seek testing and many times do not understand the importance of the information," says Louise Morrell, M.D., a genetics specialist and medical director of Lynn Cancer Institute at Boca Raton Regional Hospital, part of Baptist Health. "The more accurate our information, the better our guidance on prevention. In genetics, unlike other areas, the benefit extends to family members and perhaps for generations to come."

Inherited Cancers

Today, up to 15 percent of cancers are tied to a hereditary link. Knowing about those links may help you and other members of your family prevent or reduce the risk of cancer.

Scientists have identified many mutations that increase the risk for breast and gynecologic cancers, some prostate cancers, colon cancer, gastro-intestinal cancers, kidney cancer and more. For example, a man with prostate cancer tied to a BRCA2 mutation, could pass that mutation to his son or daughter, increasing the risk of breast

cancer in both children and of prostate cancer in the son.

Raising awareness of the value of genetic assessment and testing, particularly among men, is important to the experts at Lynn Cancer Institute and Miami Cancer Institute. Because the field of genetics moves at a rapid pace, discoveries may impact everything from guidelines for cancer screenings to treatment options for those who have cancer.

Although researchers have worked for decades on uncovering the links between genetic mutations and cancer, public knowledge grew when actress Angelina Jolie had her breasts removed in 2013, and then her ovaries in 2015, because she carried the BRCA1 gene mutation that is linked to a higher risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Ms. Jolie's mother, grandmother and aunt had died from cancer, and her decision to prophylactically remove her breasts, ovaries and fallopian tubes to lower her cancer risk came after multiple tests and conversations with experts. The same BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations that raise the risk of breast cancer in women, also raise the odds of breast cancer in men by eight times, according to the American Cancer Society.

Ask Questions

Whether you are a man or a woman, your family's health history may be the key to your future, says Arelis Mártir-Negrón, M.D., medical geneticist and head of the Clinical Genetics

program at Miami Cancer Institute. "Because as many men pass down mutations as women, you should be as aware of your father's family's cancer history as your mother's. Know your family history. Ask questions."

In general, the earlier cancer is caught, the better the chance of survival.

Like Ms. Jolie, when Matthew Knowles, the father of artists Beyoncé and Solange, announced he had breast cancer in 2019, he put the spotlight on genetics. His mother, aunt and great aunt had died from breast cancer and he learned his rare male breast cancer was caused by a BRCA2 gene mutation. He understood that his daughters had a 50 percent chance of inheriting his mutation. Genetic testing among Blacks is much lower than other races. Physicians would like that to change, particularly since some breast cancers that have a poorer prognosis also have a higher incidence in Black women. Fortunately, subsequent testing showed neither daughter had the mutation. Mr. Knowles underwent a mastectomy.

Thinking of genetics as a recipe may help some people better understand, genetic counselors say. All people inherit two copies of each gene: one from their mother and one from their father. Variations in genes are normal and are what give us our diversity. A slight change in the recipe may not make much of a difference but the wrong ingredient or too much or too little of something may cause the

recipe to change drastically. In addition, not all mutations carry the same risk.

"A BRCA mutation might lead to an 80 percent risk of breast cancer, but an ATM mutation might have a 20 percent lifetime risk," Dr. Morrell says. "These are very different, which is why having this information is so valuable."

It's important to note that just because you carry a mutation doesn't mean you will get cancer. "There are many things we take into account when we assess risk," Dr. Mártir-Negrón says. "We can suggest lifestyle modifications that could lower their chances of getting cancer. There are times when we might also suggest medications or present the idea of preventive surgery."

The genetic teams at Lynn Cancer Institute and Miami Cancer Institute offer multidisciplinary care to patients — and often their family members who may also be affected — to better understand their risks, help them determine if genetic testing would be beneficial, and assist them with understanding the results, whether they are positive, negative or inconclusive. The team also develops personalized cancer prevention for "previvors," the term used for those with a predisposition to cancer.

Fortunately, technological advances continue to make it possible to test for more genes. In recent years, improvements have sped up testing and made

it less expensive. In addition, in someone already diagnosed with cancer, the answers from genetic testing can help drive treatment and surgery decisions.

Who Should Consider Cancer Genetic Assessment?

Men should consider assessment if they:

- Have had cancer themselves
- Have an early age of onset for cancer in their family
- Have a family member with multiple types of cancer
- Have a family tree with multiple cancers, especially on one side or the other
- Are a member of certain ancestry groups with higher rates of some genetic mutations, including those of Eastern European Jewish descent.
- Couples who have a family history of cancer and are considering pregnancy also frequently take advantage of genetic assessment.

"If you really want to be able to tell your children they are not at risk to have a particular mutation, you need to test both parents," Dr. Morrell says. "The offspring can only inherit a mutation that the parents have. Mutations do not skip generations. The parent has to also inherit it."

For more information on genetic assessment, testing and counseling at the Morgan Pressel Center for Cancer Genetics contact the Lynn Cancer Institute or the Miami Cancer Institute's Clinical.



Caribbean Recipes

This month, in honor of the celebration of the independence of both Jamaica and The Bahamas, we bring you three different dishes that will surely titillate your taste buds and also put a twist on the traditional.

Jerk Sweet Potatoes

Yes, root vegetables can be jerked says Chef Nina Compton in Consumer Reports.org. Give this unique recipe a try as we celebrate Jamaica's Independence Day.

INGREDIENTS

3 large, sweet potatoes, peeled and diced into 1-inch cubes

For Jerk Seasoning

- 1 tablespoon allspice
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup butter, softened

METHOD

1. Mix all of the jerk seasoning ingredients and reserve. Preheat a toaster oven to

375° F.

Toss the sweet potatoes in the seasoning mixture and place in a roasting pan.

Roast for 20 minutes until tender, turning the potatoes every 8 minutes to ensure even cooking and that they caramelize evenly.



Jerk Sweet Potatoes

Garnish with cilantro or parsley and serve.

*If working with a smaller toaster oven, cut the recipe in half.

Makes 4 servings

Jerk Tofu And Pineapple Salsa

Another twist on jerk for vegans is Jerk Tofu And Pineapple Salsa. Here's how to make it.

INGREDIENTS

- 7-oz package extra firm tofu sliced into 8 planks and pressed
- 1/4 cup jerk seasoning
- Pineapple Salsa
- 2 cup fresh pineapple, cored and diced
- 1 mango, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 jalapeno, minced, more or less to taste
- 1/4 cup red onion, minced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
- Juice of 1 lime

METHOD

Combine salsa ingredients in a medium bowl and set aside in the refrigerator to chill. Rub the pressed tofu with jerk seasoning.



Jerk Tofu And Pineapple Salsa

Heat the grill to high heat and grill until tofu is warmed through and grill marks appear,

about 2-4 minutes per side.

Slice and serve as you would a steak with salsa on top.

Bahamian Scorched Conch Salad

As a tribute to the people of The Bahamas, we feature this week a Saturday favorite – Bahamian Scorched Conch Salad. Here's how to make it.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 large conchs
- 1 medium tomato
- 1 medium onion
- 1 sweet pepper
- 1 chili pepper (optional)
- 2 oranges
- 1 cucumber
- 10 limes
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Slice the thin side of the conch meat from the fatter trunk and cut it into ¼-inch dice.

Slice the trunk into strips, cut the strips in half, and cut into ¼-inch dice. Place the conch in a large glass bowl.

Chop tomato, onion, sweet pepper, cucumber and set aside.

Dice chili pepper and set aside.

Peel and dice one orange and set aside.

Juice limes
Juice orange.

Add all chopped and diced ingredients to bowl with conch. Pour in the lime and orange juice.

Add salt and pepper to taste.

Cover with a plastic wrap placed flush against the surface



Bahamian Scorched Conch Salad

and chill for 1 hour before serving.

Bon Appetite!

~All Recipes from NewsAmericasNow.com



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HIT & RUN FATALITY



VICTIM/PEDESTRIAN

Rupert Webley
 B/M, 68 years old

On **Sunday, May 2, 2021, at approximately 9:25 p.m.**, the above-pictured victim/pedestrian began crossing at **SW 184 Street and SW 112 Avenue, Miami, Florida**, when the subject vehicle, a Hyundai silver in color, struck and killed him. The driver of the subject vehicle fled the scene without rendering aid and/or reporting the crash.

SUBJECT VEHICLE DESCRIPTION: HYUNDAI SILVER IN COLOR. NO OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

Anyone with information on the above **HIT & RUN FATALITY**, the whereabouts of the subject vehicle and/or its driver is requested to contact Miami-Dade Police Department Traffic Homicide Detective J. Childers at (305) 471-2425. If you wish to remain anonymous, then contact Miami-Dade County Crime Stoppers at the following:

- (305) 471-TIPS (8477) or 1 (866) 471-8477
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If the tip leads to the arrest of the subject(s), the tipster may be eligible for a reward **UP TO THE AMOUNT OF \$5,000.00**. All calls are kept strictly anonymous.

ISSUE DATE: 5/11/2021 RN SUPERVISOR: Sgt. Francisco Armendariz MDPD C/N PD210502138114

If this flyer aids in your investigation in any way, please advise Deborah Simons, I.A., of the South Florida Homicide Clearinghouse at 305-471-2400.



Countdown Begins To The Summer Olympics

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has taken the excitement out of the postponed 2021 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, the countdown to this global athletic event is on.

Here are some facts you should know:
DATES: Friday, July 23, 2021 to Sunday, August 8, 2021

HOW TO WATCH THE OPENING CEREMONY

For all Caribbean fans in the US, NBC Olympics will provide coverage of the Opening Ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics on Friday, July 23.

In order to provide viewers with the opportunity to share this historic experience with people from around the world as it happens, the Tokyo Opening



The Games are still called Tokyo 2020, even though they are being held in 2021. Credit...Charly Triballeau/Agence France-Press — Getty Images

Ceremony will also be broadcast live on NBC across all time zones starting at 6:55 a.m. ET/3:55 a.m. PT, including participation by TODAY anchors who viewers

welcome into their homes each morning. It can also be streamed live in the NBC Sports app and on NBCOlympics.com. This marks

the first time NBC Olympics will broadcast an Opening Ceremony live in the morning. With Tokyo 13 hours ahead of the east coast of the United States, the Opening Ceremony begins at 8 p.m. in Japan, which is 7 a.m. ET/4 a.m. PT.

SCHEDULE – July 23, 2021

- 6:55 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. – Live Opening Ceremony Coverage
- 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. – Tokyo Olympics Daytime
- 7:30 p.m. – Midnight – Primetime Opening Ceremony
- 12:35 a.m. – 5:00 a.m.* – Overnight Replay of Opening Ceremony

WHAT IS THE TIME DIFFERENCE?

Tokyo is 13 hours ahead

of Eastern time. So, when it is evening in Japan, it is morning in the United States and vice versa.

HOW CAN I WATCH?

NBC says it plans more than 7,000 hours of coverage on NBC stations, various NBCUniversal-owned cable channels, NBCOlympics.com and the NBC Sports app. Dozens of other broadcasters hold the rights to the Games in other countries.

WHERE CAN I FIND A FULL OLYMPICS SCHEDULE?

At the Tokyo Olympics site at olympics.com/tokyo-2020/en/. The events are listed in Tokyo time, so try the handy converter at worldtimebuddy.com/?pl=1&lid=1850147,5,8&h=1850147&hf=2

CARIBBEAN ATHLETES PARTICIPATING

 Tynia Gaither TRACK & FIELD BAH	 Steven Gardiner TRACK & FIELD BAH	 Shaunae Miller-Uibo TRACK & FIELD BAH	 Maria Dimitrova KARATE DOM	 Yancarlos Martinez TRACK & FIELD DOM	 Beatriz Piron WEIGHTLIFTING DOM	 Rohan Polanco BOXING DOM	 Veronica Saladin WEIGHTLIFTING DOM	 Crismery Santana WEIGHTLIFTING DOM	 Anderson Peters TRACK & FIELD GRN	 Kyron McMaster TRACK & FIELD IVB	
 Yohan Blake TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Akeem Bloomfield TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Fedrick Dacres TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Demish Gaye TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Tajay Gayle TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Natoya Goule TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Shericka Jackson TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Ronald Levy TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Omar McLeod TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Michelle-Lee Ahye TRACK & FIELD TTO	 Kyle Greaux TRACK & FIELD TTO
 Stephanie Ann McPherson TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Shanika Ricketts TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Janieve Russell TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Jonielle Smith TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Danniel Thomas-Dodd TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Elaine Thompson-Herah TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Tyquendo Tracey TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Danielle Williams TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Kimberly Williams TRACK & FIELD JAM	 Andrew Lewis SAILING TTO	 Jereem Richards TRACK & FIELD TTO	

ATHLETICS SCHEDULE

<p>Date and Time: Fri 30 July 9:00 - 12:30 Venues: Olympic Stadium Men's 3000m Steeplechase Round 1 Men's High Jump Qualifying Round Men's Discus Throw Qualifying Round Women's 800m Round 1 Men's 400m Hurdles Round 1 Women's 100m Round 1</p>	<p>Date and Time: Sat 31 July 19:00 - 21:55 Venues: Olympic Stadium Men's 10,000m Victory Ceremony Men's Long Jump Qualifying Round Women's 100m Semifinals Men's 100m Round 1 Men's Discus Throw Final Women's 800m Semifinals Mixed 4 x 400m Relay Final Women's 100m Final</p>	<p>Date and Time: Sun 1 Aug. 9:10 - 12:00 Venues: Olympic Stadium Women's Hammer Throw Qualifying Round Women's 3000m Steeplechase Round 1 Women's Long Jump Qualifying Round Men's Discus Throw Victory Ceremony Women's Shot Put Final Men's 400m Round 1</p>	<p>Date and Time: Fri 30 July 19:00 - 21:00 Venues: Olympic Stadium Women's 5000m Round 1 Women's Triple Jump Qualifying Round Women's Shot Put Qualifying Round Mixed 4 x 400m Relay Round 1 Men's 10,000m Final</p>	<p>Date and Time: Sat 31 July 9:00 - 12:00 Venues: Olympic Stadium Women's 400m Hurdles Round 1 Women's Discus Throw Qualifying Round Men's Pole Vault Qualifying Round</p>	<p>Date and Time: Sun 1 Aug. 19:00 - 21:55 Venues: Olympic Stadium Women's 100m Victory Ceremony Men's High Jump Final Men's 100m Semifinals Women's 100m Hurdles Semifinals Women's Shot Put Victory Ceremony Women's Triple Jump Final Men's 800m Semifinals Men's 400m Hurdles Semifinals Men's High Jump Victory Ceremony Men's 100m Final</p>	<p>Date and Time: Mon 2 Aug. 9:00 - 11:55 Venues: Olympic Stadium Men's Hammer Throw Qualifying Round Women's 1500m Round 1 Women's Triple Jump Victory Ceremony Men's Long Jump Final Women's 200m Round 1 Women's 100m Hurdles Final</p>	<p>Date and Time: Mon 2 Aug. 19:00 - 22:00 Venues: Olympic Stadium Men's 100m Victory Ceremony Men's Long Jump Victory Ceremony Women's Pole Vault Qualifying Round Women's 200m Semifinals Women's 100m Hurdles Victory Ceremony Women's Discus Throw Final Men's 400m Semifinals Women's 400m Hurdles Semifinals Men's 3000m Steeplechase Final Women's 5000m Final</p>	<p>Date and Time: Tue 3 Aug. 9:00 - 12:35 Venues: Olympic Stadium Men's Triple Jump Qualifying Round Men's 1500m Round 1 Women's Javelin Throw Qualifying Round Women's 400m Round 1 Women's Discus Throw Victory Ceremony Men's 3000m Steeplechase Victory Ceremony Women's Long Jump Final</p>	<p>Date and Time: Tue 3 Aug. 19:00 - 21:55 Venues: Olympic Stadium Women's Long Jump Victory Ceremony Men's 110m Hurdles Round 1 Men's Shot Put Qualifying Round Men's Pole Vault Final Men's 400m Hurdles Victory Ceremony Men's 5000m Round 1 Women's Hammer Throw Final Men's 200m Semifinals Women's 800m Final Women's 200m Final</p>	<p>Date and Time: Tue 3 Aug. 19:00 - 21:55 Venues: Olympic Stadium Men's 200m Round 1 Men's 400m Hurdles Final Women's 5000m Victory Ceremony</p>	<p>Date and Time: Wed 4 Aug. 9:00 - 12:25 Venues: Olympic Stadium Men's Decathlon 100m Men's Javelin Throw Qualifying Round Women's Heptathlon 100m Hurdles</p>
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(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16A)

These Caribbean Footballers Are Moving On Up

Three Caribbean footballers have joined English National League clubs.

UK-born, Antigua and Barbuda-roots winger, Rhys Browne, has joined Wealdstone on an initial one-year contract with the option to extend to two years.

And Barbados forward Hallam Hope and Montserrat defender Rohan Ince have switched to new clubs in the fourth and fifth tiers of English football.

Browne, 25, made one appearance on a short-term deal

last season for Wealdstone – nicknamed the Stones – before joining Sutton United until the end of the campaign in the fifth tier.

He made 14 appearances to help Sutton win the National League title, guaranteeing them an automatic spot in League Two next season, along with Hartlepool United, who beat Torquay United in Sunday's play-off final to clinch the other place.

Wealdstone finished 19th of 22 last season.

Hope, 27, has joined League Two club Oldham Athletic on a



UK-born, Antigua and Barbuda-roots winger, Rhys Browne, has joined Wealdstone

one-year deal following his release from Swindon Town. He made 36 appearances and scored five goals

for Swindon last season during a campaign in which they were relegated from League One.

"I love scoring goals and working hard and it's a big season ahead," said Hope, who played under Oldham boss Keith Curle during his time at Carlisle United.

Meanwhile, former Swindon midfielder Ince, who made his

international debut for Montserrat earlier this year, has joined National League side Woking.

The 28-year-old will link up with Woking – where his teammates are expected to include Bermudian striker Jonté Smith – on July 1st after a season at fellow fifth-tier outfit Maidenhead United.

Ince's Montserrat debut came in a World Cup qualifier against Antigua and Barbuda in March which ended in a 2-2 draw.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



Guyanese Olympian Is Now Head Coach At This NY College

Four-time Guyanese-born Olympian, Aliann Pompey, has achieved another milestone in her long athletics career.

Pompey has been appointed head coach of the St. John's Track and Field and Cross-Country program. The appointment comes after Pompey was announced as the new sprints and hurdles coach of the Red Storm in the fall of 2014 and on Nov. 11, 2020, was promoted to the position of associate head coach for the St. John's track & field program.

Pompey has helped guide the Red Storm sprinters and hurdlers to new heights since her arrival in Queens. Her athletes have rewritten the indoor record book in the 60-meter hurdles, the 200 and 400 meters three times, the 500 meters, the 2x200-meter relay and hold the second-fastest time in program history for the 4x400-meter relay.

The 43-year-old Pompey replaces Jim Hurt, who retired in May after a head coaching career lasting 40 years.

In accepting the position, Pompey said she plans to make St John's a major force in collegiate athletics.

"I want to thank Mike Cragg for his vote of confidence and his support in appointing me as



Four-time Guyanese-born Olympian, Aliann Pompey, has achieved another milestone in her long athletics career.

the head coach," she said. "It is with great honor that I accept this position. I have seen the growth and successes of this team over the years – from a distance when I was in college, and intimately over the last seven years. I want to continue the tradition of excellence for which we've become known. ... I am excited to continue working with our returning student-athletes who have committed to making our team better. Joined by the incoming class, we'll strive to be impactful not just with the Big East, but nationally."

In addition to her responsibilities as a coach, Pompey currently serves as the president of the Panam Sports Athlete Commission. She was

also a member of the Athletes' Commission and she is also a member of the organization's executive board and a liaison to the International Olympic Committee. Pompey is now in her third year as the Metropolitan Athletic Conference President. Pompey represented her home country of Guyana at the 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012 Summer Olympics, at five Outdoor World Championships in Athletics, and the IAAF World Indoor Championships on four occasions. Her personal best time in the 400 meters was achieved in August 2009 at the World Championships in Berlin, Germany, with a mark of 50.71. During the summer of 2016, Coach Pompey enjoyed another Olympic appearance, however this time in a different capacity – traveling to Rio de Janeiro as an assistant manager with the Guyanese Olympic Team.

A graduate of Manhattan College, Pompey became the Jaspers' first-ever national champion after winning the 400-meter dash at the 2000 NCAA Division I Track & Field Championships. Pompey owns the South American indoor record of 51.83 seconds at the distance and was a finalist at the 2010 World Championships; and added a gold

medal at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester.

She has also earned a silver medal at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi and a bronze

medal at the 2003 Pan American Games in Santo Domingo.

~ *NewsAmericasNow.com*



BOLT TODAY



Flashback – (L-R) Asafa Powell of Jamaica and Usain Bolt of Jamaica compete in the Men's 100m Final at the National Stadium on Day 8 of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games on August 16, 2008 in Beijing, China. Usain Bolt of Jamaica finished the event in first place with a time of 9.69. (Photo by Adam Pretty/Getty Images)- 2008 Getty Images

Bolt thinks his famous athletics world records will remain intact during Tokyo 2020 in 2021. "I'm very confident," Bolt said during an Instagram Live with @Olympics.

"I'm not saying it's not going to happen. But I don't think the crop I'm watching; I don't think they're there at a level [to run times of] 9.58s or 19.19s. So, we'll see what happens," he added.

In 2008, Usain Bolt went to

Beijing as the favorite to win the 100-m title on the athletics track in the iconic Bird's Nest Stadium. He won individual Olympic titles in the 100-m and 200-m at world record paces and became a global phenomenon. The current 100-m and 200-m world records was set a year later at the World Championships in Berlin. The 100-m record stands at 9.58s with the 200-m at 19.19s.



ATHLETICS SCHEDULE continued

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15A)

Men's Decathlon Long Jump
Men's Pole Vault Victory Ceremony
Women's Heptathlon High Jump
Women's Hammer Throw Victory Ceremony
Women's 800m Victory Ceremony
Men's 110m Hurdles Semifinals
Women's 400m Hurdles Final
Men's Decathlon Shot Put
Women's 400m Hurdles Victory Ceremony

Date and Time:

Wed 4 Aug. 18:30 - 22:00

Venues: Olympic Stadium

Men's Decathlon High Jump
Women's 1500m Semifinals
Women's Heptathlon Shot Put
Women's 400m Semifinals
Women's 200m Victory Ceremony
Women's 3000m Steeplechase Final
Men's Hammer Throw Final
Women's Heptathlon 200m
Women's 3000m Steeplechase Victory Ceremony
Men's 800m Final
Men's Decathlon 400m
Men's 200m Final

Date and Time: Thu 5 Aug. 9:00 - 15:05

Venues: Olympic Stadium

Men's Decathlon 110m Hurdles
Women's High Jump Qualifying Round
Men's Hammer Throw Victory Ceremony
Women's Heptathlon Long Jump
Men's Decathlon Discus Throw
Women's 4 x 100m Relay Round 1
Men's 800m Victory Ceremony
Men's 200m Victory Ceremony
Men's Triple Jump Final
Men's Shot Put Final
Men's 4 x 100m Relay Round 1
Men's 110m Hurdles Final
Men's Decathlon Pole Vault
Women's Heptathlon Javelin Throw

Date and Time: Thu 5 Aug. 16:30 - 18:05

Venues: Sapporo Odori Park

Men's 20km Race Walk Final
Men's 20km Race Walk Venue Ceremony
*Session tickets not for sale

Date and Time: Thu 5 Aug. 19:00 - 21:45

Venues: Olympic Stadium

Men's Shot Put Victory Ceremony
Men's Triple Jump Victory Ceremony

Men's Decathlon Javelin Throw
Women's Pole Vault Final
Women's 4 x 400m Relay Round 1
Men's 1500m Semifinals
Men's 110m Hurdles Victory Ceremony
Men's 400m Final
Women's Heptathlon 800m
Men's Decathlon 1500m

Date and Time: Fri 6 Aug. 5:30 - 10:00

Venues: Sapporo Odori Park

Men's 50km Race Walk Final
Men's 50km Race Walk Venue Ceremony
*Session tickets not for sale

Date and Time: Fri 6 Aug. 16:30 - 18:15

Venues: Sapporo Odori Park

Women's 20km Race Walk Final
Women's 20km Race Walk Venue Ceremony
*Session tickets not for sale

Date and Time: Fri 6 Aug. 19:50 - 22:55

Venues: Olympic Stadium

Men's 20km Race Walk Victory Ceremony
Women's Pole Vault Victory Ceremony
Women's Heptathlon Victory Ceremony
Men's Decathlon Victory Ceremony

Men's 4 x 400m Relay Round 1
Women's Javelin Throw Final
Men's 5000m Final
Men's 400m Victory Ceremony
Women's 400m Final
Women's 1500m Final
Men's 5000m Victory Ceremony
Women's 400m Victory Ceremony
Women's 4 x 100m Relay Final
Women's 1500m Victory Ceremony
Men's 4 x 100m Relay Final

Date and Time: Sat 7 Aug. 7:00 - 10:15

Venues: Sapporo Odori Park

Women's Marathon Final
Women's Marathon Venue Ceremony
*Session tickets not for sale
*The victory ceremony of Women's Marathon will take place at the Olympic Stadium during the closing ceremony.

Date and Time: Sat 7 Aug. 19:00 - 22:20

Venues: Olympic Stadium

Men's 50km Race Walk Victory Ceremony
Women's 20km Race Walk Victory Ceremony
Women's 4 x 100m Relay Victory Ceremony

Men's 4 x 100m Relay Victory Ceremony
Women's High Jump Final
Women's 10,000m Final
Men's Javelin Throw Final
Women's Javelin Throw Victory Ceremony
Men's 1500m Final
Women's 10,000m Victory Ceremony
Men's 1500m Victory Ceremony
Women's 4 x 400m Relay Final
Men's Javelin Throw Victory Ceremony
Men's 4 x 400m Relay Final
Women's High Jump Victory Ceremony
Women's 4 x 400m Relay Victory Ceremony

Date and Time: Sun 8 Aug. 7:00 - 9:45

Venues: Sapporo Odori Park

Men's Marathon Final
Men's Marathon Venue Ceremony

*Session tickets not for sale

*The victory ceremony of Men's Marathon will take place at the Olympic Stadium during the closing ceremony.



Caribbean Hotel Rooms From USD 6,000 A Night?

Sandals Resorts is betting on the ultra-luxury traveler in the pandemic era, as Caribbean regional tourism tries hard to return to some level of normalcy.

Sandals Resorts International reopened its Royal Barbados hotel in mid-May after being shuttered by the pandemic for more than a year and elite guests paid as much as \$6,000 a night to stay in the hotel's top suites. At more than \$6,000 for one night, the top-tier beachside suites at the Sandals Royal Barbados cost three to six times as luxury resorts across the Caribbean. At Sandals Emerald Bay in the Bahamas, a beachfront villa with two bedrooms can fetch \$8,000 for one night—or near \$9,000 for three nights.

Sandals Executive Chairman

Adam Stewart is aiming to keep that target market growing. He told Bloomberg News recently: "We are positioning ourselves at the top of the all-inclusive segment. While others have stayed at the 2 1/2- or 3-star level, we're building into the 5- and 6-star realm."

During the pandemic, the younger Stewart, pumped \$75 million into new hotels in Curaçao and Saint Vincent, which are slated to open in the spring of 2022 and 2023, respectively. There are no plans to again restart efforts to sell the company, which by some accounts was valued at \$4.5 billion in 2019.

~ *Rewritten from Bloomberg News*



Antigua and Barbuda Gives Airport Taxes A 50 Percent Shave

Antigua and Barbuda has announced a 50 per cent reduction in taxes on airline tickets for travel within several countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for the next six months in the first instance.

The measure became effective on Monday, June 28th. Prime Minister Gaston Browne said that a reduction in taxes would assist the cash-strapped regional airline, LIAT, which has been placed under court ordered administration.

Last week, CARICOM leaders, who are members of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), met and among the agenda items were the proposal to cut taxes.

There has been no indication as to the position adopted at the



Courtesy of Scott Wilson and VC Bird International

Antigua & Barbuda's V.C. Bird Airport

meeting, but the CARICOM leaders are to meet early next month for their annual summit, where it is expected that Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley, who has lead responsibility for CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and chaired last

weekend's deliberations, will report to her regional colleagues. The CSME allows for the free movement of goods, skills, labor and services within the region.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



Haitians Now Need A Visa To Travel To Guyana

Guyana has officially withdrawn the automatic six-month stay granted to Haitians on arrival in the country, revoking an earlier order that allowed nationals from the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country to enter the country without a visa.

Guyana President Irfaan Ali recently revoked in its entirety, the January 2019 order by former president David Granger, under which Haiti had been added to the list under the Immigration Act.



Guyana passport visa

Haiti, despite being a full member of CARICOM, has not always enjoyed free movement into member countries under the CARICOM Single Market and

Economy, (CSME) that allows for the free movement of goods, skills, labor and services across the majority of the 15- member grouping.

The new order was dated June 22, 2021. Only Haitian diplomats would not require visas to enter Guyana. Anyone, other than diplomats, with a Haitian passport, will need to secure a visa for travel to the South American CARICOM nation.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



Caribbean Urged To Redouble Efforts To Ensure Survival Of Tourism Sector

Jamaica's Tourism Minister, Edmund Bartlett, has called on the countries of the Caribbean and the Americas to redouble their efforts in finding practical and meaningful solutions for the reactivation of the travel and tourism sector.

His comments came as Jamaica hosted the 66th meeting of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Regional Commission for the Americas (CAM) and the Ministerial Dialogue on 'Reactivation Of The Tourism Sector For Inclusive Growth.'

The tourism sector in the Americas has been significantly impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and UNWTO Barometer for January to March 2021, indicates that the region recorded a 68 per cent decrease in international tourist arrivals in 2020. The

figures show that an estimated 70 million tourist arrivals were reported, down from 219 million in 2019.

The report also noted that international tourism receipts in the Americas declined 60 per cent in real terms in 2020 over the previous year.

In addition, the UNWTO's ninth report on travel restrictions, indicates that 10 destinations in the Americas, which account for 20 per cent of all destinations in the region, had completely closed their borders as of February 1, 2021.

Jamaica will relinquish its position as chair of the UNWTO Regional Commission at the General Assembly in Morocco in October.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*



Here's What's New In The Bahamas

Celebrate Bahamian Independence Day with one of South Florida's most sought-after performers, DJ Kid Fresh, July 9-11, 2021. Packages start at \$478 per person including round-trip transportation, Hilton Hotel stay, access to events at the Hilton Hotel and access to Resorts World Bimini Beach.

Additionally, U.S. and Canadian travelers can book a vacation package of four nights or longer at one of the participating Bahama Out Islands Promotion Board hotels and receive a \$250 air credit. Booking window: now – July 31, 2021.

For a complete listing of

deals and packages for The Bahamas, visit bahamas.com/deals-packages.

CRUISING

MSC Cruises has announced the relaunch of its sailings to The Bahamas aboard MSC Divina beginning September 16, 2021. The ship will dock at its private Bahamian island, Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve. Booking is now available.

HOTELS

Graycliff Hotels has received two prestigious accolades for exceptional service, including for the 33rd consecutive year with the

Grand Award in Wine Spectator's 2021 Restaurant Awards and for the first business in The Bahamas to be granted the Travelers Health Assurance Stamp for "Healthier Safer Tourism" by the Caribbean Public Health Agency.

And Sandals Royal Bahamian Expands Renovation Project – the award-winning hotel, spa and private island located in Nassau, Sandals Royal Bahamian, has been undergoing multimillion-dollar renovation. New features will include Coconut Grove, an expansive lounge area that extends the beach vibes to the center of the resort.



10 Caribbean Countries Make UK Green List

Ten Caribbean countries have been added to the UK's 'Green List,' meaning, Britons will not be quarantined on their return from holidaying in the list of Caribbean islands.

Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, the British Overseas Territories of Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands and



UK Heathrow Airport

Montserrat are on the Caribbean Green List that went into effect on June 30th.

The listing means people would not have to quarantine for 14 days when they return to the United Kingdom. It would also allow for passengers to make their connections on the same day from Europe.

~ *Rewritten from CMC*

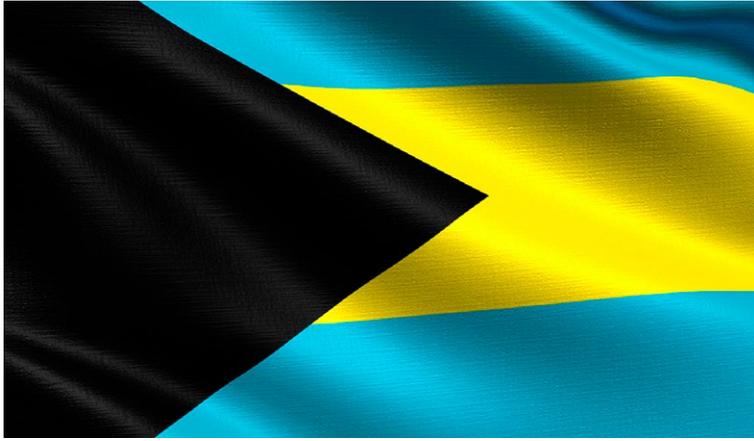


Thank You

On behalf of the entire Webley family, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all the people who took the time to send their condolences after the untimely death of our brother, Rupert Jr., who was killed by a hit-and-run driver. The love and outpouring of affection was warmly received and greatly appreciated.

SALUTE TO BAHAMAS

www.caribbeantoday.com

The Bahamas Turns 48

The islands of the Bahamas will celebrate its 48th birthday on July 10th with a national holiday this year on July 12th.

This public holiday marks independence from the United Kingdom in 1973 and is the National Day of The Bahamas. Though there is some dispute as to the actual location, The Bahamas is the site of Columbus' first landfall in the New World in 1492.

The Bahamas became a British Crown colony in 1718 as a result of the British trying to suppress piracy in the region. Following the American war of independence, many British loyalists moved to The Bahamas, bolstering its British connections.

Moves toward independence

didn't start until after the end of the second world war, with local political parties only forming in the 1950s. A new constitution giving more local autonomy came into effect in 1964. In 1967, The Bahamas achieved majority rule for the first time.

The British House of Lords voted to give The Bahamas its independence on June 22, 1973. On July 10, 1973, The Bahamas was officially declared an independent nation when the documents relating to independence were delivered to Prime Minister Lynden Pindling by Prince Charles. The Bahamas joined the Commonwealth of Nations on July 10, 1973.

**Frontier Airlines Is Now Flying To The Bahamas**

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Frontier Airlines is now flying to The Bahamas from Miami.

Celebrating its inaugural flight to The Bahamas late last month, the Denver-headquartered Frontier Airlines added the major leg to its growing Caribbean routes. The Miami-Nassau non-stop flight is an important market for Bahamas tourism, and may prove to be a lucrative addition for the low-cost airline. The flight will operate from Miami to Nassau's Lynden Pindling International Airport four times each week, with service on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

"Nassau is a premier destination from the United States, and we are excited to bring low fares to one of the largest routes to the Bahamas. It will benefit both tourists who want to visit and Bahamians who want to get away to South Florida," said Barry Biffle, Frontier Airlines CEO.

The addition of Frontier Airlines to the growing number of air carriers servicing The Bahamas comes as a result of the ongoing drive by the Ministry of Tourism & Aviation



Frontier Airlines CEO Barry Biffle and Bahamas Consul General in Miami Linda Mackey exchange symbolic gifts prior to the inaugural flight.

and key industry partners to expand airlift to the destination. A robust increase in airlift from major source markets figures as a key element in the Ministry's overall strategy for tourism recovery.

"Frontier Airlines' multiple flights per week provide a breath of fresh air to our tourism economy as this air link connects our destination to the hub of the Southeastern USA, including Florida, a market from which we annually attract a significant share of our visitors," said Bahamas Minister of Tourism & Aviation, Dionisio D'Aguiar.

CARIBBEAN FOCUS

With an innovative frequent flyer program and creative purchase options that include buying in bundles, Frontier is aggressively growing its presence in the Caribbean and will continue expanding in the region for several years to come, according to Biffle. And, in spite of the disruption to the travel industry as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the airline has 'weathered the storm' by keeping costs down and looking to novel ways of increasing its customer base, emerging without any staff or salary reductions.

UNLOCKING DEMAND

Among its creative incentives, the carrier offers potential passengers the ability to customize travel to their needs and budget. For example, customers can purchase options a-la-carte or in one low-priced bundle called the WORKS. This bundle includes refundability, a carry-on bag, a checked bag, the best available seat, waived change fees, and priority boarding.

As well, Biffle explained that the airline has taken all precautions necessary to ensure passenger safety as air travel begins to grow again, noting that "the vaccine is unlocking

demand and people are feeling safe again. Also, we have proven that flying is very safe due to the air quality onboard."

In fact, the company emphasizes that during flight, main cabin air is a mix of fresh air drawn from outside and air that has been passed through an air filtration system that features HEPA filters capable of capturing respiratory virus particles at more than 99.9% efficiency — similar to those used in hospital environments. Plus, Frontier's modern all-Airbus fleet is among the youngest in the world, with an average age of approximately four years.

Serving roughly 120 destinations in the US, Caribbean, Mexico, and central America the company operates more than 100 A320 family aircraft and has the largest A320neo fleet in the US. The use of these aircraft, Frontier's seating configuration, weight-saving tactics, and baggage process have all contributed to the airline's average of 43 percent fuel savings compared to other U.S. airlines. The result is continued growth evidenced by airline's approximately 150 new Airbus planes on order.

The airline is also adding nonstop flights from Miami to Costa Rica and St Maarten this month, bringing its Miami nonstop routes to 33, a move that highlights the airline's commitment to making travel to popular vacation destinations more accessible for South Floridians, the CEO added. The industry is expected to fully bounce back by 2023 and Frontier is poised to be amongst the top. Biffle is optimistic about the airline's future.

"We can't speak for the industry but having the lowest costs and providing the lowest fares for customers is what we believe ensures we keep winning!"

**BACK TO SCHOOL**

It's that time of year again!! August is 'Back to School' month in Caribbean Today. Please join us as we explore what is new and expected for the upcoming school year.

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Bahamas Opposition Critical Of New Travel Health Visa Requirement



Bahamas Travel Health Visa

The main opposition Progressive Liberal Party, (PLP) has come out swinging at the travel health visa requirement put in place by the government.

“The travel visa is an unnecessary tax imposed by the FNM (Free National Movement) government on Bahamian families and businesses when they can least afford it,” the PLP said in a statement, adding that it “does not believe Bahamians should be charged to travel within their own country, nor should Bahamians be charged to return home after travelling abroad.”

The PLP said it would also end the travel visa for visitors, if it wins the next election, noting that travelers visiting Barbados, Jamaica, Turks and Caicos, St Lucia, St Kitts, the Dominican Republic or any number of other Caribbean destinations are not required to purchase a travel visa for each family member on top of other testing and insurance costs.

The comments come as Bahamas Tourism and Aviation Minister, Dionisio D’Aguilar told Parliament recently that the statistics show the tourism

sector was bouncing back with the country issuing nearly 300,000 Bahamas Travel Health Visas to visitors to enter the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country over the first five months of this year.

D’Aguilar said officials at the Bahamas Travel Health Visa Unit are currently processing 6,000-8,000 health visa requests daily and that the only way officials can process so many applications on a daily basis is to be constantly fine-tuning their technology.

Grand Bahama Gets Ready For Dive Grand Bahama



Grand Bahama Island, known for its award-winning beaches, spectacular dives and amazing sea life, has just added the first ever Dive Grand Bahama Event, which is slated for July 19-23, 2021, in Freeport, Grand Bahama.

The thrilling five-day event is organized by the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism & Aviation (BMOTA) in conjunction with Pelican Bay Resort, UNEXSO and Bahamasair and will feature Bahamas Dive Ambassadors, open water certified divers and local divers.

Divers can expect to experience customized and certified two-tank open water dives around Grand Bahama’s famous dive sites including shallow and wall wrecks, reefs, and dolphin and Caribbean reef shark encounters. In addition to the many dives, participants will also experience a welcome reception, city tour and dive seminar.

According to Aram Bethel, Dive Executive at BMOTA, “Grand Bahama, year after year, receives the award for ‘Best Dive Destination for Big

Animal Encounters,’ by Scuba Divers Readers’ Choice. No other destination offers the dive diversity and plethora of activities that Grand Bahama has, from its amazing blue holes and world’s largest underwater cave systems to its thrilling large Tiger, Hammerhead and Lemonhead shark encounters.”

“Based on the pent-up demand and interests our verticals team (Donna Ash and Deckery Johnson) received from travelers, and divers in particular, all of whom are ready to getaway, recharge and experience nature again, we made a decision to conduct this very special event. Not only does it showcase our beautiful dive product and destination, but it also generates additional revenue for the island,” Bethel said.

“Due to limited availability of hotel accommodations at Pelican Bay, staffing at UNEXSO as well as discounted airline seats on Bahamasair (promotional code: 00MXD951), only the first 40 divers will be able to participate in this program,” Bethel pointed out.

Lenny Kravitz Celebrates The Bahamas In “Raise Vibration”

Lenny Kravitz is celebrating his Bahamas getaway in the new video for “Raise Vibration,” which appeared on his 2018 album of the same name.

The video was filmed in the country of his mother’s ancestors - where the guitarist had been living during the Covid-19 pandemic - and directed by famed photographer Mark Seliger. It captures Kravitz performing “Raise Vibration” in various stunning natural scenes, while some special effects give the clip an additional psychedelic edge. The video was released on June 25th and had over 142,000 views on YouTube as of June 28th.

“This song is very special to

me,” Kravitz said of the video in a statement. “It’s all about hope, banding together, and remaining fearless in the pursuit of your passion and purpose. Mark and I hold this message close to heart. We wanted to celebrate the beauty of the Bahamas in the video and try to capture the spirit of inspiration synonymous with the islands. It’s something I want to share once I get back on the road.”

Last year, Kravitz released his long-awaited memoir “Let Love Rule.” The singer is also working on new music “for release very soon,” according to a press release.

Top Chef To Open First Caribbean Restaurant



Baha Mar Welcomes Six-Time James Beard Award-Winning Chef Marcus Samuelsson’s Newest Restaurant: Marcus at Baha Mar Fish + Chop House

Six-time James Beard Award-winning Chef Marcus Samuelsson is set to open his first restaurant in the Caribbean.

Get ready for Marcus at Baha Mar Fish + Chop House this July 12th at Baha Mar, the leading resort destination in The Bahamas and home to celebrated brands Grand Hyatt, SLS and Rosewood.

Marcus at Baha Mar Fish + Chop House is a celebration of Chef Marcus Samuelsson’s passion for exploring flavors, from finding the freshest Bahamian ingredients and local seafood to sharing his latest take on comfort food classics,” a statement from Baha Mar said.

Located on the spectacular beachfront overlooking the pristine white sand and turquoise waters of The Bahamas, Marcus at Baha Mar Fish + Chop House features a variety of dining venues including Marcus Up Top, a distinctive rooftop bar ideal

for a sunset cocktail, a tropical garden and the dining room, a perfect spot for romantic date nights as well as family dinners.

The new restaurant joins Baha Mar’s celebrated collection of over 40 restaurants and lounges, including the recently introduced Café Boulud, Carna by Dario Cecchini steakhouse, and Chef Marcus’s oceanside food truck, Streetbird on the Beach -- a more casual compilation of Samuelsson classics with island-inspired elements.

“The Bahamian people, the culture and, of course, the access to fantastic Caribbean ingredients is extremely exciting to be around,” said Chef Marcus Samuelsson. “Baha Mar has built an incredible culinary program of world-class restaurants, which I am proud to join and looking forward to opening this Summer.”



Proud to honor Bahamas Independence Day.

July 10

